AESCHYLUS

ORESTEIA

AGAMEMNON
LIBATION-BEARERS
EUMENIDES

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY

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PREFACE

The Loeb edition of Aeschylus by Herbert Weir Smyth is now more than eighty years old, and its translation is couched in a pastiche version of the English of several centuries earlier. It was augmented in 1957 by the addition of an invaluable appendix by Hugh Lloyd-Jones, updating the Fragments section in the light of papyrus discoveries, but no changes were made to the original portion of the work. Aeschylus has long been overdue for a Loeb edition that would provide a text based on up-to-date information and a translation intelligible to the present-day reader. This, following in the footsteps of the admirable Loeb editions of the other great Greek dramatists by Geoffrey Arnott (Menander), Jeffrey Henderson (Aristophanes), David Kovacs (Euripides) and Hugh Lloyd-Jones (Sophocles), I have endeavoured to provide, together with annotation which, while remaining within the space limitations necessitated by the format of the series, is somewhat more generous than has hitherto been usual. I am deeply grateful to Jeffrey Henderson for giving me the opportunity to do so; I wish also to thank all who have assisted me with information or advice, including copies of published or unpublished work which I might otherwise have overlooked or found hard to trace. I am grateful to the School of Humanities, University of Nottingham, for two semesters of

research leave in 2003 and 2006, but for which this project would have taken far longer to complete. I am happy to recall and acknowledge my debt to my teachers, especially Martin Lowry with whom I first read Aeschylus; to my Nottingham colleagues—I cannot imagine a more pleasant human environment in which to work—among whom particular mention is due to Patrick Finglass and to Isabelle Torrance, now of the University of Notre Dame, Indiana; and not least to my students, many of whom have contributed, directly or indirectly, valuable ideas to this edition, often without knowing it and sometimes, very likely, without my being consciously aware of it.

I have not in general been able to refer to studies which appeared, or came to my notice, later than the summer of 2007.

Alan H. Sommerstein
Nottingham, October 2007

INTRODUCTION

The *Oresteia*[1]—the tetralogy consisting of the plays now called *Agamemnon*, *Libation-Bearers* (*Choephoroi*), *Eumenides*, and the lost satyr-drama *Proteus* (on which see the *Fragments* volume)—was produced at the City Dionysia of 458 BC and won first prize; we do not know who the other competitors were, but we do have the name of the *choregos* who financed the production, the otherwise unknown Xenocles of Aphidna.[2] It was probably Aeschylus' last production at Athens. The first three plays con-

[1] Aristotle's chronological catalogue of dramatic productions, the *Didascaliae*, recorded the tetralogy under this name (schol. Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1124), as doubtless did the official records on which it was based. The individual plays probably did not originally have titles of their own (see my edition of *Eumenides* [Cambridge, 1989], pp. 11–12); it is striking that the Furies are never called Eumenides in the text of the play now known by that name, and that Aristophanes (loc. cit.) refers to the prologue of *Libation-Bearers* as τὸν ἐξ Ὀρεστείας (sc. πρόλογον), not the metrically equivalent τὸν ἐκ Χοηφόρων.

[2] This is stated in the Hypothesis and confirmed by the festival records, which happen to survive for this year (*IG* ii² 2318.49–51).

stitute the only Athenian tragic trilogy to survive (almost) complete.[3]

The story of how Agamemnon was murdered on his return home from Troy, together with his Trojan concubine Cassandra, by his wife Clytaemestra[4] and her lover, Agamemnon's cousin Aegisthus, and of how Agamemnon's son Orestes later returned from exile to take revenge on his father's killers, was older than Homer (who adjusts it so as to be able to make Orestes an appropriate role model for Telemachus) and had already taken many forms in poetry and in art before Aeschylus (for the first time, so far as we know) brought it to the tragic stage.[5] After the death of

[3] Apart from small lacunae here and there, the only section that has been lost is the first part of the prologue of *Libation-Bearers*, whose substance, however, can in large measure be reconstructed from quotations and paraphrases in other ancient sources, notably Aristophanes' *Frogs*.

[4] Her name in Greek is Κλυταιμήστρα, in Latin *Clyt(a)emestra*; the form with *-μν-* first appears in the middle Byzantine period (see Fraenkel on *Agamemnon* 83), and is due to a false etymological connection with μνάομαι "woo, court". Aeschylus, for his part, sometimes plays on an etymological link (which may or may not be correct) with μήδομαι "scheme, contrive" (*Ag.*1100–2, *Cho.* 991; see also Garvie on *Cho.* 648–652).

[5] On the earlier history of the myth, see M. Davies, *BCH* 93 (1968) 214–160; A. J. N. W. Prag, *The Oresteia: iconographic and narrative traditions* (Warminster, 1985); J. R. March, *The Creative Poet* (London, 1987) 79–98; A. M. Moreau, *REG* 103 (1990) 30–53; D. Knoepfler, *Les imagiers de l'Orestie* (Zürich, 1993); H. A. Shapiro, *Myth into Art* (London, 1994) 125–148; A. H. Sommerstein, *Aeschylean Tragedy* (Bari, 1996) 190–204; and the introductions to A. F. Garvie's edition of *Choephori* (Oxford, 1986), pp. ix–xxvi, and to A. J. Podlecki's edition of *Eumenides* (Warminster, 1989), pp. 1–9, and my own (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 1–6.

Aegisthus and Clytaemestra the accounts diverge widely, though the pursuit of Orestes by his mother's Furies (Erinyes), and Apollo's protection of him, go back at least to the sixth-century lyric *Oresteia* of Stesichorus.[6] It is not clear whether there already existed before Aeschylus an Athenian version in which Orestes was tried and acquitted on the Areopagus for the murder of his mother, or whether this was Aeschylus' own invention.[7]

There is much in the *Oresteia*, at any rate, that certainly or almost certainly was Aeschylus' own invention: the presentation of the entire story as, among other things, a war of the sexes, with the powerful presentation of Clytaemestra as a "masculine woman" dominating all the men with whom she has dealings; the transfer of both Agamemnon and Menelaus from Mycenae or Sparta to a joint kingship at Argos;[8] the emphasis on the personal role of Agamemnon in the sacrifice of Iphigeneia; the killing of Agamemnon by Clytaemestra alone, with Aegisthus not even in the building; the sending abroad of Orestes, ostensibly for his own safety, *before* Agamemnon's return (in Stesichorus and Pindar he was rescued at the time of the murder); the deluding of Clytaemestra and Aegisthus by a

6 *PMG* 217.

7 The latter was the view of Felix Jacoby (*FGrH* vol. iii.b Suppl. pp. 24–25); I defended the other view in the introduction to my 1989 edition of *Eumenides* (pp. 3–6).

8 Several earlier poets (Stesichorus, Simonides, Pindar) explicitly or by implication placed them both at Sparta—a version which may already have been known when the *Odyssey* was composed (cf. *Odyssey* 3.249, 4.514–6); there was a tomb of Agamemnon at nearby Amyclae (Pausanias 3.19.6).

false report of Orestes' death; Clytaemestra's failure to get hold of an axe or other weapon to defend herself and/or Aegisthus, so that she is killed unarmed and in cold blood; the unification of the story of Apollo's protection of Orestes with the story (if indeed it already existed) of his trial at Athens; the presentation of that trial as the first murder trial ever held at Athens,[9] perhaps the first ever held anywhere; the identification of the *Semnai Theai*, worshipped near the Areopagus, with the Furies (who were normally thought of as impervious to prayer, and received no cult); and the linkage made between the story of Orestes, the well-being of Athens in the here-and-now, and current political and military events (see below). On the other hand, several very striking features of Aeschylus' treatment are attested earlier in literature or art. The method by which Agamemnon is killed—bathed by his wife, then invited to put on a rich robe which proves to be a fatal snare—is already to be seen on a vase-painting probably datable ten or fifteen years earlier.[10] Clytaemestra's ominous dream, the meeting of Orestes and Electra at their father's tomb, and the recognition of Orestes by means

[9] In all other sources the first murder trial at Athens was that of Ares for the murder of Halirrothius (so e.g. Euripides, *Electra* 1258–62, *Iphigeneia in Tauris* 945–6; Demosthenes 23.66; [Apollodorus], *Library* 3.14.2), from which the Areopagus was usually said to have taken its name; Aeschylus has to manufacture an alternative explanation of the name (*Eum.* 685–690).

[10] Calyx-krater by the Dokimasia Painter, Boston 63.1246 (*LIMC* Agamemnon 89). In this painting Aegisthus has already wounded Agamemnon once with his sword, and is about to strike again, while Clytaemestra is running towards them with an axe. In Aeschylus it is she who wields the sword (*Ag.* 1528, *Cho.* 1011).

of a lock of hair, all featured in Stesichorus' poem.[11] And when Clytaemestra, realizing that her son has returned and rightly assuming that he is determined to kill her, calls for "an axe that can kill a man" (*Cho.* 889), we are reminded of a long tradition, evidenced today by artistic representations stretching back at least a century before Aeschylus, in which she is shown, shortly before meeting her death, with that axe in her hand. The story of the *Oresteia* is thus a very complex blend of the new and the old.

The plays of the *Oresteia* are the earliest surviving Athenian dramas that give clear evidence of the presence of a building (the *skēnē*) as part of the performing space; in the first two plays it represents the palace of Agamemnon and Menelaus (and also their family—for Greek οἶκος, like English "house", had both meanings), thereafter for a time the temple at Delphi. At the same time the old fluidity of scene-setting, inherited from the pre-*skēnē* theatre, had not yet faded away. When Orestes comes to Athens, he clasps the ancient olive-wood image of Athena Polias which was, and must have been imagined as having always been, *inside* her temple. Since not only Orestes but also the chorus who presently dance around him must have been perceived as being inside the temple, we cannot here invoke the *ekkyklēma* with its limited space; rather the whole performing area is taken to represent the interior of the temple, just as in a pre-*skēnē* play like *Myrmidons* (*q.v.*) it had represented the interior of Achilles' hut in the Achaean camp before Troy.[12]

[11] *PMG* 217, 219.

[12] However, S. Scullion, *Three Studies in Athenian Dramaturgy* (Stuttgart, 1994) 80–81, noting that Orestes' words πρόσεμμα δῶμα (242) imply that he is not yet inside the temple, prefers the view

Aeschylus does, however, appear to have made free use of the *ekkyklēma* elsewhere in the trilogy:[13] in *Agamemnon* for the tableau of Agamemnon dead in the bathtub, with Cassandra beside him and Clytaemestra standing triumphant over them; in *Libation-Bearers* for a very similar tableau with different personnel, the two corpses being those of Clytaemestra and Aegisthus, their slayer Orestes; in *Eumenides* for a markedly different one, Orestes suppliant at the "navel-stone" of Delphi and beset by the Furies —except that the Furies are fast asleep. He may also have used the flying-machine (*mēchanē*) for the entrance of Athena at *Eum.* 397 (cf. 404), if it was available, but it is not clear whether it was.[14]

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that in the Athens scene, as in the Delphi scene, the *skēnē* represents the front of the temple, and that the image of Athena was placed either just inside its door or (in an artificial but theatrically comprehensible move) just outside it.

[13] This was denied by Taplin, *Stagecraft* 325–7, 357–8, 369–374, 442–3; he was cogently refuted by A. L. Brown, *JHS* 102 (1982) 28 n.13.

[14] The flying-machine was almost certainly used in *The Weighing of Souls* (*q.v.*); but this is now under some suspicion of not being a genuine Aeschylean play (see M. L. West, *CQ* 50 [2000] 345–7). If this parallel is discounted, the earliest unequivocal evidence for the use of the *mēchanē* comes in Euripides' *Medea* (431 BCE) and in *Prometheus Bound* which probably also belongs in the late 430s (see Introduction to that play). It is likely that in the pre-*skēnē* theatre references to off-stage flight (like *Eum.* 404), by characters who made their entrance and exit on foot, were normal and unproblematic; such characters would mostly be divine, but there would be the odd mortal such as Perseus in *Phorcides* (*q.v.*), who by the end of the play should have his winged sandals. Once the *mēchanē* was in common use, it soon became virtually impossible for a character to be thought of as travelling through the air unless (s)he actually arrived on stage by the aerial route.

INTRODUCTION

The *Oresteia* was produced at a critical time in Athenian history, and more than any other surviving tragic drama—more even than *Persians*—it bears clear signs of the impact of events and issues of the day. Having been at war with Persia for more than twenty years, Athens was now, by her own choice, at war also with a major Greek power, Corinth; our chronology for this period is not secure enough, and our information not full enough, to know whether Sparta and the rest of the so-called Peloponnesian League already considered themselves to be involved in this war, but if they did not, they could become so at any moment, particularly since Athens in 462/1 had made an alliance with Sparta's traditional enemy, Argos. Meanwhile a large Athenian expedition to Cyprus had been diverted to Egypt after the outbreak there of an anti-Persian rebellion, and Athenian troops were besieging the Persians and loyalist Egyptians in Memphis, the ancient capital of the pharaohs; with two hundred ships, this had been the largest expedition sent by any Greek city to fight in a non-Greek land since Agamemnon sailed for Troy. During one period of twelve months[15] Athenians had fought on three continents, and had lost nearly two thousand dead.[16]

[15] The period probably ended at some point in the winter or early spring, at the time when all the Athenians who had fallen in war during the year were given a public funeral (cf. Thucydides 2.35–46), but it is not clear whether the campaigning season included within it was that of 460 or of 459.

[16] A surviving inscription (*IG* i^3 1147) records the names of 177 Athenians, from just one of the city's ten tribes, "who died in the war, in Cyprus, in Egypt, in Phoenicia, at Halieis, in Aegina, at Megara, in the same year".

At the same time, there had been great changes in the internal politics of Athens, and tensions had developed that threatened to kindle violent internal conflict. In 462/1, when Cimon's policy of alliance with Sparta had been reversed, Cimon himself had been ostracized, and his then main opponent, Ephialtes, had carried a measure or measures drastically reducing the powers of the Council of the Areopagus and confining it to a few functions with powerful roots in tradition and religion, the most important of which was the trial of certain cases of homicide.[17] This council consisted of all who had held one of the nine archonships, which at this time could be filled, at least in theory, only by those who were rich enough to own a horse;[18] so if before Ephialtes it had been able, by whatever mechanism, to exercise substantial political power, it would have been seen, by both supporters and opponents, as a restraint on democracy, and virtually the only such restraint of any significance—for the annual magistrates,

[17] Those in which the charge was of intentionally killing an Athenian citizen, and in which the defendant did not claim that the homicide was lawful. Other cases were tried by a body of men over fifty called the *ephetai*; we are nowhere told how they were selected, and it is quite possible that they were merely the senior members of the Areopagus council (or a specified number of men chosen by lot from among these).

[18] Those who were eligible were members of the first and second of Solon's four property classes—and the second class was designated ἱππῆς "horsemen", though the actual qualification, in Solon's time, had been defined in terms of agricultural produce. The property threshold for the archonship was soon to be lowered, and in practice came to be disregarded altogether (Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens* 26.2 and 7.4).

except for the ten generals, being now appointed by lot (though in some cases from a "long list" initially chosen by vote), had already lost most of their influence. Shortly afterwards, Ephialtes died under circumstances that convinced most people that he had been murdered, and no one, or at least no Athenian, was ever convicted of killing him.[19] His death could not undo his political reforms, which were consolidated and extended under the leadership of Pericles (Aeschylus' one-time *choregos*). But most supporters of democracy will have believed that Ephialtes—whose murder, if such it was, was Athens' first political assassination for over half a century—had been done to death for his championship of their cause, and that his murderers were still in Athens and free to plot further mischief; and some are likely to have thought that something needed to be done, by violence if necessary, to stop them.

And certainly there *were* anti-democrats who were

[19] The Aristotelian *Constitution of Athens* (25.4) says he was killed by a Boeotian, Aristodicus of Tanagra; but a client of the speechwriter (and anti-democrat) Antiphon, addressing an Athenian jury over forty years later (Antiphon 5.68), says that Ephialtes' murderers were never discovered. These two statements may be reconciled if we suppose that the foreigner Aristodicus was convicted of the murder (or fled the country to avoid trial and/or torture) but that many thought he was only the agent of a homegrown conspiracy—just as Oedipus, when told that his predecessor Laius was killed by robbers while travelling, immediately leaps to the conclusion that there must have been a Theban or Thebans who paid them to do it, and is then informed that this was the view taken at the time though no full investigation could be made (Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 122–7).

ready to plot mischief, even to the extent of treason. Their opportunity eventually came either in the summer of 458 or in that of 457. The Athenians were then engaged in building the Long Walls linking the city with Peiraeus and Phalerum, which would make it impossible for any enemy to reduce the city by blockade while Athens retained command of the sea; and there was a Spartan-led army in Boeotia, on its way back from an expedition to central Greece. The Athenian democrats believed—and Thucydides, whose family connections will have provided him with excellent sources on a subject like this, says they were right—that opponents of democracy were encouraging the Spartans to march on Athens, hoping to effect a change of régime and to stop the construction of the Long Walls; they forestalled this by marching out themselves (with a force that included a thousand of their Argive allies); the resulting battle at Tanagra ended in a victory for the Spartans, but they had suffered heavy casualties and afterwards merely returned home.[20] The Long Walls were completed, Athens within a couple of months had conquered Boeotia, Phocis and Locris, and its democratic system was never again remotely under threat until after the Sicilian disaster more than four decades later.

Many of the events and tensions of the period seem to be alluded to in the plays, especially *Eumenides*, with considerably more clarity than is usual in tragedy. Orestes (or Apollo on his behalf) three times promises an eternal alli-

[20] They had been unable to do so previously, because Athenian troops and ships were blocking both their land route through the Megarid and their sea route across the Gulf of Corinth (Thucydides 1.107.3).

ance between his city of Argos and Athens (*Eum.* 289–291, 667–673, 762–777). He and Athena both wish blessing on Athenian arms (*Eum.* 776–7, 913–5, 1009), and Athena even goes so far as to wish that they may have many wars against external enemies (*Eum.* 864) in a context which makes it clear that *this* is to be regarded as a blessing! When Orestes appeals for Athena to come to his aid, he speculates that she may be "in a region of the land of Africa . . . to aid her friends" (*Eum.* 292–5): the recent expedition to Egypt was the first occasion on which Athens had ever sent a force to fight on the African continent. Both Athena and the Erinyes pray that Athens may have no civil strife (*Eum.* 858–866,[21] 976–987). And, most strikingly, the play is centred on the trial of Orestes for homicide before the Areopagus council, represented (unusually, as we have seen) as the first such trial ever held and the occasion for the council's foundation, and Athena is given a speech in which she praises the council lavishly and warns "my citizens for the future" against "innovative additions to the laws" which may prevent it from fulfilling its function as a "wakeful sentinel for the land" (*Eum.* 690–706).

The last-mentioned passage has received several different interpretations. The most obvious, perhaps, is to take "innovative additions to the laws" as referring to the reforms of Ephialtes, which were designed precisely to curb the activities of the Areopagus council, and against which, even several years after they were enacted, Aeschylus will in effect, on this view, have been protesting. At least as widely supported, however, is an interpretation

[21] There is reason to believe that this passage is a last-minute addition; see note on 859.

almost diametrically opposed to this: it is argued that the position of Ephialtes and his supporters was that they were abolishing only the "added powers" (ἐπίθετα) which the council (it was said, or implied) had acquired illegitimately, and leaving it with its true original role as a homicide court (cf. Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens* 25.2)—a role which could be of no small political importance, especially in a state with recent experience of political assassination.[22] It has also been suggested that Athena's words are to be understood as a warning against *further* changes to the composition or powers of the Areopagus council, such as the proposal, carried not very long afterwards, to open the archonships, and therefore membership of the Areopagus, to citizens of the third Solonian property class. It is possible that this uncertainty of interpretation was exactly what Aeschylus designed, in the hope of gaining a favourable reception from reformers and anti-reformers alike;[23] this view gains some support from the existence of a curious grammatical ambiguity in the same speech of

[22] And the phrase "a wakeful sentinel . . . *to protect those who sleep*" would be particularly likely to call to mind the murder of Ephialtes if, as is a plausible deduction from the accounts we have quite independently of this passage, he was killed while he slept. I have argued for this in J. H. Molyneux ed. *Literary Responses to Civil Discord* (Nottingham, 1993) 7–10, on the basis of Antiphon 5.68 and Diodorus Siculus 11.77.6.

[23] So already, immediately after the rediscovery of the Aristotelian *Constitution of Athens*, U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Aristoteles und Athen* ii (Berlin, 1893) 341. In the same way, despotism, anarchy, and civil strife, all of which are condemned in the play, are all things to which both factions alike would at least profess to be strongly opposed.

Athena (*Eum.* 690–2; see note on that passage) which leaves it uncertain whether she is saying that fear of the Areopagus council will keep the citizens from doing wrong, or that fear of the citizenry will keep the council from doing wrong. It does not necessarily follow that Aeschylus' actual personal opinions on the issue were ambivalent, any more than they were ambivalent on other issues such as the Argive alliance; but if he did have strong partisan views on the Areopagus question, he seems to have chosen not to put them into the drama.

At the end of the trilogy the Furies are given the new name of Semnai Theai[24] or "Awesome Goddesses". The Semnai Theai were a group of goddesses who had a cave-

[24] *Eum.* 1041 (where, however, *θεαί* is a conjectural supplement in a line which, as transmitted, is a syllable shorter than its antistrophic counterpart). The transmitted title of the third play, *Eumenides*, is no more likely to be original than *Seven against Thebes* (see Introduction to that play); it appears nowhere in the surviving text. The Hypothesis (and Harpocration ε161, probably deriving from an earlier version of it) does say that Athena "after mollifying the Furies gave them the name of Eumenides", and many scholars have suggested that she did so in the lacuna which almost certainly exists before or after line 1027; but if she gave them any new name at this point, it was surely Semnai Theai (seeing that at 1041 the secondary chorus already know this name, which has not otherwise been mentioned before). The play will have acquired its title after the popularity of Euripides' *Orestes* (38, 321, 836, 1650) standardized "Eumenides" (Kindly Ones) as a euphemistic name for the Furies in the Orestes story, and the Hypothesis' statement will be an error based on the title (A. L. Brown, *CQ* 34 [1984] 269–271, has a more complex but probably unnecessary explanation for how it arose).

sanctuary between the Acropolis and the Areopagus[25] and a festival in their honour marked by a notable procession.[26] They were thought of as special protectors of Athens, and decrees prescribing prayers for the welfare of the city sometimes named them among the gods to be prayed to;[27] their sanctuary was a recognized place of asylum for fugitives,[28] and a breach of this right in the seventh century was thought to have given rise to a hereditary curse that could still be used as a weapon in politics and diplomacy over two hundred years later.[29] The Semnai Theai were closely associated with the Areopagus Council, which sat near their sanctuary: the days on which the council met were sacred to them,[30] prosecutors, defendants and witnesses appearing before the council took solemn oaths in their name,[31] and successful defendants made sacri-

[25] Thucydides 1.126.11 and Plutarch, *Solon* 12.1 (on the way down from the Acropolis; cf. *Eum.* 855); Pausanias 1.28.6 (near the Areopagus).

[26] *Eum.* 856; Demosthenes 21.115; Philo, *Every Virtuous Man is Free* 140; scholia on Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus* 489. The festival was supervised by a board of three (later ten) *hieropoioi*, chosen (very unusually) neither by lot nor by popular election but by the Areopagus Council itself; in the fourth century Demosthenes, and probably Lycurgus, served on this board (Demosthenes 21.115 with scholia; Deinarchus fr. 8.2 Conomis).

[27] e.g. *IG* ii^2 112; cf. Aeschines 1.188.

[28] Thucydides and Plutarch (as in n.25); Aristophanes, *Knights* 1312, *Women at the Thesmophoria* 224.

[29] Thucydides 1.126.2–127.3; cf. Aristophanes, *Knights* 445–6 (though in both passages it is the sacrilege against Athena which is given most—in the latter passage, sole—prominence).

[30] Scholia to Aeschines 1.188.

[31] Deinarchus 1.46, 87.

fices to the Semnai Theai after their acquittal.[32] They also, to judge by *Eumenides* itself, were seen as promoters of plant, animal and human fertility (903–910, 938–948, 958–967) and appropriately received offerings before marriage and childbirth (835). With the exception of their link with the Areopagus Council—which can easily be accounted for by topographic proximity—this profile is quite unlike what we would expect for beings like the Furies, who are never normally recipients of any cult at all; and in contrast to the presentation of the Furies in *Eumenides*, whose "fearsome faces" are remarked on by Athena (991) even after they have turned from cursing to blessing, the cult-images of the Semnai Theai had "nothing fearsome" about them.[33] It is therefore highly likely that the identification of these very Athenian goddesses with the Furies who persecuted Orestes was first made by Aeschylus himself.[34] By

[32] Pausanias 1.28.6.

[33] Pausanias *loc.cit.*

[34] A. L. Brown, *CQ* 34 (1984) 262–3, mentions this only as a possibility; I positively affirmed it in my edition of *Eumenides* (p. 11) and in *Aeschylean Tragedy* 204 (see also A. Lardinois, *GRBS* 33 [1992] 315–322). S. I. Johnston, *Restless Dead* [Berkeley, 1999] 269 argues that "it is very unlikely that Aeschylus would have been so bold as to link goddesses who previously were viewed as completely benign with goddesses who were previously viewed as completely maleficent"; but no one says he did, since we know anyway that the Semnai Theai were *not* "previously viewed as completely benign" (otherwise they could not have punished breaches of oaths taken in their name). Johnston's claim that the Erinyes were never regarded as "completely maleficent" is partly *a priori* (resting on the dubious assertion [*Restless Dead* 250] that "Greek religion knows of no divinity who is completely negative")

this innovation he at once deepens the significance of the connection between the Semnai Theai and the Areopagus Council, creates a solid new link between the story of Orestes and the world of contemporary Athens, reinforces the strong pattern whereby towards the end of *Eumenides* images and symbols of evil are transformed into images and symbols of blessing, and is enabled to end the trilogy with a procession, including both the Semnai Theai and Athena, which can be, and surely was, seen as combining elements from the two great cultic processions in which these powers were respectively honoured by the Athenian people.[35]

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and partly circular (resting on the assumption that the Erinyes-Eumenides equation is of early origin, on which see note 24 above). The Aeschylean Erinyes, according to Apollo, "were absolutely born for evil" (*Eum.* 71), and according to Clytaemestra's ghost the sole activity allotted to them by destiny was "doing harm" (*Eum.* 125).

[35] The procession in honour of Athena was that of the Panathenaea, on which see notes on *Eum.* 1028, 1031/2, and A. M. Bowie, *CQ* 43 (1993) 27–30.

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SIGLA

Π	Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 2178 (*Agamemnon* 7–17, 20–30) (2nd c. AD)
M	Laurentianus xxxii 9 (10th c.) (lacks *Ag.* 311–1066, 1160–end)
M^s	the contemporary reviser of M who wrote its scholia
V	Venetus Marcianus gr. 468 (c.1270) (has *Ag.* 1–348 only)
G	Venetus Marcianus gr. 616 (c.1321) (has *Ag.* 1–45, 1095–end; *Eum.* 1–581, 645–777, 808–end)
F	Laurentianus xxxi 8 (c.1335–48) (has *Ag.* complete; *Eum.* as above)
E	Salmanticensis Bibl. Univ. 233 (c.1450–70) (has only *Eum.* 1–581, 645–680, 719–777, 808–982)
Tr	Neapolitanus II F 31 (c.1325), written by Triclinius (has *Ag.* complete; *Eum.* as in G F)
f	the common ancestor of GF(E)Tr
z	a reading conjectured or adopted by Triclinius, either in the text of Tr or as a variant or correction therein[1]
m	one or more 14th–16th century copies of M

[1] Such readings, or earlier attempts at emendation by Triclinius, may also appear in one or more of G F (E).

codd. the agreement of M V*f* (in *Ag.* 1–310) or V*f* (in *Ag.* 311–348) or M*f* (in *Ag.* 1067–1159)

Ald. the Aldine *editio princeps* (ed. F. Asulanus, Venice, 1518)

Scholia and Testimonia

Σ^{M} scholia in M

Σ^{Tr} the scholia of Demetrius Triclinius, found in Tr

t one or more other ancient or medieval authors citing the text[2]

[2] Specific references are given for some testimonia which are particularly notable, usually for their antiquity, and for all those which preserve parts of the opening lines of *Libation-Bearers* where M is lost.

ABBREVIATIONS

AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
BCH	*Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*
BICS	*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, University of London*
CA	*Classical Antiquity*
CGITA	*Cahiers du Groupe Interdisciplinaire du Théâtre Antique*
CJ	*Classical Journal*
CP	*Classical Philology*
CQ	*Classical Quarterly*
CR	*Classical Review*
D-K	H. Diels (rev. W. Kranz), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin, 1951–2)
FGrH	F. Jacoby and others, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Leiden, 1923–)
Gantz	T. R. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth* (Baltimore, 1993)
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
HSCP	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae*
K-A	R. Kassel and C. Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci* (Berlin, 1983–)

KPS	R. Krumeich, N. Pechstein and B. Seidensticker, *Das griechische Satyrspiel* (Darmstadt, 1999)
JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zürich, 1981–97)
MH	*Museum Helveticum*
PCPS	*Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*
PMG	D. L. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford, 1962)
Podlecki	A. J. Podlecki, "Aischylos satyrikos", in G. W. M. Harrison ed. *Satyr Drama: Tragedy at Play* (Swansea, 2005) 1–19
Prag	A. J. N. W. Prag, *The Oresteia: Iconographic and Narrative Traditions* (Warminster, 1985)
QUCC	*Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica*
REG	*Revue des Études Grecques*
RhM	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*
SIFC	*Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica*
Sommerstein *AT*	A. H. Sommerstein, *Aeschylean Tragedy* (Bari, 1996)
TAPA	*Transactions of the American Philological Association*
Taplin, *Stagecraft*	O. P. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford, 1977)
trag. adesp.	*tragica adespota* (anonymous tragic fragments)

TrGF	*Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta:* vol. iii, *Aeschylus* ed. S. L. Radt (Göttingen, 1985). vol. iv, *Sophocles* ed. S. L. Radt (2nd ed., Göttingen, 1999)
West, *Studies*	M. L. West, *Studies in Aeschylus* (Stuttgart, 1990)
YCS	*Yale Classical Studies*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

The surviving plays of the Aeschylean corpus are abbreviated as *Pers.*, *Seven*, *Supp.*, *Prom.*, *Ag.*, *Cho.* and *Eum.*; the poet's name may be abbreviated as "Aesch."

207b (369)

ἐκ πηλοπλάστου σπέρματος θνητὴ γυνή

Scholia to Hesiod, *Works and Days* 157 (κατὰ τὸν Αἰσχύλον)

ἐκ R: τοῦ cett.

208

σιγῶν θ' ὅπου δεῖ καὶ λέγων τὰ καίρια

Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 13.19.4 (*aput Aeschylum* ἐν τῷ πυρφόρῳ Προμηθεῖ)

θ' (τε) cett.: γε Z

ΠΡΟΠΟΜΠΟΙ

ΠΡΩΤΕΥΣ

This was the satyr-drama that concluded the Oresteia *tetralogy; it is generally agreed that it must have presented the adventures of Menelaus in Egypt, which he narrates in the fourth book of the* Odyssey *(351–580). Proteus in the* Odyssey *was the prophetic, shape-changing "Old Man of the Sea"; in Stesichorus (Chamaeleon fr. 29 Wehrli =* PMG *193), in Herodotus (2.112–120), and in Euripides'* Helen, *he was simply a human king of Egypt. We do not know how he was presented in Aeschylus, though the evidence, such as it is, tends to favour the Homeric over the Stesichorean model (see below). The play's focus on Menelaus seems to be prepared for, earlier in the tetralogy, by references to his*

207b (369)

A mortal woman created by the fashioning of clay.[1]

Referring to Pandora (so the scholiast who cites the line).

[1] lit. "from clay-fashioned seed".

208

Staying silent when appropriate and saying what suits the occasion.[1]

[1] This line is almost identical with *Cho.* 582, and very similar to *Seven* 619.

THE ESCORT

Nothing whatever is known about this play except for its title and a one-word citation (fr. 209), neither of which gives any clue to its subject-matter.

PROTEUS

disappearance on the homeward voyage from Troy, and his possible eventual return, in Agamemnon *(617–633, 674–9) and* Libation-Bearers *(1041). Some of the descriptions of Helen in* Agamemnon, *in particular those at 404–426 and 737–743, have also led Cunningham and Griffith (see below) to suggest that Aeschylus, like Euripides after him, used Stesichorus' idea that the Trojan War was fought for a phantom divinely substituted for Helen while the real Helen, unknown to Menelaus or anyone else, was in Egypt; but fr. 211 suggests that, as in the* Odyssey, *Menelaus was not on the Egyptian mainland but on a small island off its coast, where he and his party were forced to subsist*

210

σιτουμένην δύστηνον ἀθλίαν φάβα
μέσακτα πλευρὰ πρὸς πτύοις πεπληγμένην

Athenaeus 9.394a

2 *πεπληγμένην* Schweighaeuser: *πεπλεγμένην* cod.

ΣΑΛΑΜΙΝΙΑΙ

The medieval catalogue calls this play Σαλαμίνιοι, *implying a chorus of male Salaminians, but this has no support among the authors who cite the fragments, and there are other errors of the same type in the catalogue (see on* Women of Argos *and* Lemnian Women*). The most famous mythical episode to take place on Salamis was the return from Troy of Teucer, the half-brother of Ajax, and his*

unheroically on fish (cf. Odyssey *4.354–369)—and neither a human king Proteus, nor Helen as a guest of his, would have been living in such a place. The satyrs, who may have found themselves on the island as a result of shipwreck (as in Euripides'* Cyclops*), perhaps gave assistance to Menelaus and escaped with him, though he may well have had difficulty in ensuring that they kept their hands off Helen. Eido (in Homer, Eidothea), the daughter of Proteus, may have been a character in the play (fr. 212).*

Recent discussions: M. Cunningham, "Thoughts on Aeschylus: the satyr play *Proteus*—the ending of the *Oresteia*", *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 19 (1994) 67–68; Sommerstein *AT* 189–190; R. Germar and R. Krumeich in KPS 179–181; P. Yziquel, "Le drame satyrique eschyléen", *CGITA* 14 (2001) 1–22, esp. 10–13; M. Griffith, "Slaves of Dionysos: satyrs, audience, and the ends of the *Oresteia*", *CA* 21 (2002) 195–258, esp. 237–254; D. Del Corno, "Odisseo fra i Satiri", in G. Zanetto et al. ed. *Momenti della ricezione omerica* (Milan, 2004) 187–195; Podlecki 7.

210

A poor wretched pigeon trying to feed,[1] which has been struck by winnowing-fans and had its ribs clean broken.

[1] sc. on the grain that is being winnowed.

WOMEN OF SALAMIS

banishment by his angry father Telamon for having failed to protect Ajax's life; he afterwards founded the city of Salamis in Cyprus. It is generally accepted that this was the subject of this play, and that it probably followed The Award of the Arms *and* Thracian Women *(qq.v.) as the third play in an Ajax trilogy.*

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΦΥΛΑΞ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΓΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ ΑΡΓΕΙΩΝ
ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ
ΚΗΡΥΞ
ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ
ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
ΛΟΧΑΓΟΣ

AGAMEMNON

Characters of the Play

WATCHMAN, *a slave of Agamemnon*
CHORUS *of elders of Argos*
CLYTAEMESTRA, *queen to Agamemnon*
HERALD *of Agamemnon's army*
AGAMEMNON, *king of Argos (jointly with his brother Menelaus) and leader of the expedition against Troy*
CASSANDRA, *daughter of Priam king of Troy, and captive of Agamemnon*
AEGISTHUS, *cousin to Agamemnon, and lover of Clytaemestra*
CAPTAIN *of Aegisthus' guards*

The *Oresteia*, consisting of *Agamemnon*, *Libation-Bearers*, *Eumenides*, and the satyr-play *Proteus*, was produced in 458 BC.

Scene: Before the palace of Agamemnon and Menelaus at Argos.

The play begins with a WATCHMAN *alone on the palace roof.*

ΦΤΛΑΞ

Θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶνδ' ἀπαλλαγὴν πόνων,
φρουρᾶς ἐτείας μῆκος, ἣν κοιμώμενος
στέγαις Ἀτρειδῶν ἄγκαθεν, κυνὸς δίκην,
ἄστρων κάτοιδα νυκτέρων ὁμήγυριν,
καὶ τοὺς φέροντας χεῖμα καὶ θέρος βροτοῖς
λαμπροὺς δυνάστας ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι,
†ἀστέρας† ὅταν φθίνωσιν ἀντολάς τε τῶν.
καὶ νῦν φυλάσσω λαμπάδος τὸ ξύμβολον,
αὐγὴν πυρὸς φέρουσαν ἐκ Τροίας φάτιν
ἁλώσιμόν τε βάξιν· ὧδε γὰρ κρατεῖ
γυναικὸς ἀνδρόβουλον ἐλπίζον κέαρ.
εὖτ' ἂν δὲ νυκτίπλαγκτον ἔνδροσόν τ' ἔχω
εὐνὴν ὀνείροις οὐκ ἐπισκοπουμένην
ἐμήν—φόβος γὰρ ἀνθ' ὕπνου παραστατεῖ,
τὸ μὴ βεβαίως βλέφαρα συμβαλεῖν ὕπνῳ—
ὅταν δ' ἀείδειν ἢ μινύρεσθαι δοκῶ,
ὕπνου τόδ' ἀντίμολπον ἐντέμνων ἄκος,
κλαίω τότ' οἶκου τοῦδε συμφορὰν στένων,
οὐχ ὡς τὰ πρόσθ' ἄριστα διαπονουμένου.
νῦν δ' εὐτυχὴς γένοιτ' ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων
εὐαγγέλου φανέντος ὀρφναίου πυρός.

7 ἀστέρας codd.:]στ̣ε̣[Π: ⟨τηρῶν⟩ A. Y. Campbell.

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1 The comparison is to a dog resting with forelimbs stretched forward and head slightly raised; this would be a good, and reasonably sustainable, position in which to look out for a fire on a distant hill.

WATCHMAN

I beg the gods to give me release from this misery—from my long year of watch-keeping, during which I've spent my nights on the Atreidae's roof, resting on my elbows like a dog,[1] and come to know thoroughly the throng of stars of the night, and also those bright potentates, conspicuous in the sky, which bring winter and summer to mortals,[2] <observing> them as some set and others rise. And now I'm looking out for the agreed beacon-signal, the gleam of fire bringing from Troy the word and news of its capture; for such is the ruling of a woman's hopeful heart, which plans like a man. But while I keep this night-walker's bed, wet with dew, this bed of mine not watched over by dreams[3]—for it is Fear instead of Sleep that stands beside me, preventing me from closing my eyes firmly in sleep—but when I decide to sing or hum, applying[4] this remedy to charm away sleep, then I weep, grieving over the fortunes of this house, which is not now admirably managed as it used to be. But now may there be a happy release from misery, by the appearance in the darkness of the fire that brings good news.

2 Such as the Pleiades (cf. 826), Sirius (cf. 967), and Arcturus (cf. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 1137), whose first visible rising or setting before sunrise marked the onset of one or another season of the year.

3 "Watched over" and "stands beside" evoke the Homeric picture (e.g. *Iliad* 2.20) of the dream-figure standing over the sleeper's head and speaking to him.

4 lit. "incising", a metaphor from the extraction of herbal remedies from plants by making incisions in their roots or stems; *ἀντίμολπον* "to charm away" (lit. "singing against") alludes to another method of healing, the chanting of incantations.

ὦ χαῖρε, λαμπτήρ, νυκτὸς ἡμερήσιον
φάος πιφαύσκων καὶ χορῶν κατάστασιν
πολλῶν ἐν Ἄργει τῇσδε συμφορᾶς χάριν.
ἰοὺ ἰού·
Ἀγαμέμνονος γυναικὶ σημαίνω τορῶς
εὐνῆς ἐπαντείλασαν ὡς τάχος δόμοις
ὀλολυγμὸν εὐφημοῦντα τῇδε λαμπάδι
ἐπορθιάζειν, εἴπερ Ἰλίου πόλις
ἑάλωκεν, ὡς ὁ φρυκτὸς ἀγγέλλων πρέπει·
αὐτός τ' ἔγωγε φροίμιον χορεύσομαι·
τὰ δεσποτῶν γὰρ εὖ πεσόντα θήσομαι,
τρὶς ἓξ βαλούσης τῇσδέ μοι φρυκτωρίας.
γένοιτο δ' οὖν μολόντος εὐφιλῆ χέρα
ἄνακτος οἴκων τῇδε βαστάσαι χερί.
τά δ' ἄλλα σιγῶ· βοῦς ἐπὶ γλώσσῃ μέγας
βέβηκεν. οἶκος δ' αὐτός, εἰ φθογγὴν λάβοι,
σαφέσταθ' ἂν λέξειεν· ὡς ἑκὼν ἐγὼ
μαθοῦσιν αὐδῶ κοὐ μαθοῦσι λήθομαι.

30 ἀγγέλλων *z*: ἀγγέλων M V*f*.

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5 Greek ὀλολυγμός, a ululation normally uttered by women and particularly associated with climactic moments such as the slaughter of a sacrificial beast.

6 lit. "make a move in accordance with", as if in πεσσοί (a game somewhat resembling backgammon).

7 The Watchman is in effect saying (to imaginary listeners): "Do you know what I was talking about? If you do, I needn't tell you. If you don't, I *can't* tell you, because I've deliberately forgotten it myself!" The theatre audience, knowing the story well, will

He suddenly leaps up in joy.

O welcome, beacon, bringing to us by night a message of light bright as day, a message that will be the cause of many choral dances in Argos in response to this good fortune! Ahoy, ahoy! I proclaim plainly to the wife of Agamemnon that she should raise herself from her bed, as quickly as may be, and on behalf of the house raise a shrill, auspicious cry of triumph[5] over this beacon, if indeed the city of Ilium has been taken as the fire-signal vividly declares. And I will dance a prelude myself [*skipping about in delight*]: I shall take advantage of[6] the dice that have fallen well for my masters—this beacon-watch has thrown me a triple six! Well, anyway, may it come to pass that the master of the house comes home and that I clasp his well-loved hand in this hand of mine. About other matters I say nothing; a great ox has stepped upon my tongue. The house itself, were it to find voice, might speak very plainly; as far as I am concerned, I am deliberately speaking to those who know—and for those who do not, I am deliberately forgetting.[7]

He descends into the house, and out of sight. A woman's cry of triumph is heard within.[8] *A servant comes out of the palace, kindles incense on the altar in front of its door, and departs towards the city centre.*[9] *Then enter, from the same side, the* CHORUS *of Argive elders.*

understand that he is alluding to the adultery of Clytaemestra and Aegisthus.

[8] Cf. 27–29 above, and 587 below.

[9] Cf. 85–96 and 594–7 below.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δέκατον μὲν ἔτος τόδ' ἐπεὶ Πριάμῳ
μέγας ἀντίδικος
Μενέλαος ἄναξ ἠδ' Ἀγαμέμνων,
διθρόνου Διόθεν καὶ δισκήπτρου
τιμῆς ὀχυρὸν ζεῦγος Ἀτρειδᾶν,
στόλον Ἀργείων χιλιοναύτην
τῆσδ' ἀπὸ χώρας
ἦραν, στρατιῶτιν ἀρωγήν,
μεγάλ' ἐκ θυμοῦ κλάζοντες Ἄρη,
τρόπον αἰγυπιῶν οἵτ' ἐκπατίοις
ἄλγεσι παίδων ὕπατοι λεχέων
στροφοδινοῦνται
πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι,
δεμνιοτήρη
πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες·
ὕπατος δ' ἀΐων ἤ τις Ἀπόλλων
ἢ Πὰν ἢ Ζεὺς οἰωνόθροον
γόον ὀξυβόαν τῶνδε μετοίκων
ὑστερόποινον
πέμπει παραβᾶσιν Ἐρινύν.
οὕτω δ' Ἀτρέως παῖδας ὁ κρείσσων

40 Πριάμω M V: Πριάμου *f.*
48 μεγάλ' Page: μέγαν codd.

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10 Throughout this play Aeschylus exploits the ambiguity of Ἀργεῖοι, which can mean either "men of Argos" or (as regularly in Homer) "Greeks".

CHORUS

This is the tenth year since against Priam
his great prosecutor,
King Menelaus, together with Agamemnon,
the Atreidae, a pair firmly yoked
in the honour of their twin thrones and twin sceptres
given by Zeus,
launched the thousand-ship expedition of the Argives[10]
from this land
as military backers for their suit,
uttering from their hearts a great cry for war,
like birds of prey[11] who, crazed
by grief[12] for their children, wheel around
high above their eyries,
rowing with wings for oars,
having seen the toil of watching
over their nestlings' beds go for nothing;
and some Apollo on high, or Pan,
or Zeus, hearing the loud shrill wailing cries
of the birds, exacts belated revenge
on behalf of these denizens of his realm
by sending a Fury against the transgressors.
So the sons of Atreus were sent

[11] αἰγυπιός is usually rendered "vulture", but in Homer (esp. *Iliad* 17.460) they are raptors (like eagles), not scavengers; probably the lammergeyer or bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*) is meant, since this bird was (wrongly) believed by the ancients to be a raptor. See J. R. T. Pollard, *Birds in Greek Life and Myth* (London, 1977) 79–80.

[12] lit. "in out-of-their-path grief", i.e. in grief that makes them wildly alter their normal flight patterns.

ἐπ᾽ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ πέμπει ξένιος
Ζεὺς, πολυάνορος ἀμφὶ γυναικὸς
πολλὰ παλαίσματα καὶ γυιοβαρῆ,
γόνατος κονίαισιν ἐρειδομένου
διακναιομένης τ᾽ ἐν προτελείοις
κάμακος, θήσων Δαναοῖσιν
Τρωσί θ᾽ ὁμοίως. ἔστι δ᾽ ὅπῃ νῦν
ἐστι, τελεῖται δ᾽ ἐς τὸ πεπρωμένον·
οὔθ᾽ ὑποκαίων οὔτ᾽ ἐπιλείβων
ἀπύρων ἱερῶν
ὀργὰς ἀτενεῖς παραθέλξει.
ἡμεῖς δ᾽ ἀτίται σαρκὶ παλαιᾷ
τῆς τότ᾽ ἀρωγῆς ὑπολειφθέντες
μίμνομεν ἰσχὺν
ἰσόπαιδα νέμοντες ἐπὶ σκήπτροις·
ὅ τε γὰρ νεαρὸς μυελὸς στέρνων
ἐντὸς ἀνάσσων
ἰσόπρεσβυς, Ἄρης δ᾽ οὐκ ἔνι χώρᾳ,

69 *ὑποκαίων* Casaubon: *ὑποκλαίων* codd.
69 *οὔτ᾽ ἐπιλείβων* Schütz: *οὔθ᾽ ὑπολείβων* codd.
70 *ἀπύρων* Bamberger: *οὔτε δακρύων ἀπύρων* codd.
71 *παραθέλξει* codd.: *παραθέλξεις* Headlam.

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13 The more common Greek name for the person better known to Romans and moderns as Paris (and so called at 399 and 532 below).

14 Because Paris had abused the hospitality of Menelaus by seducing and eloping with his host's wife.

15 For this ironic use of *προτέλεια*, properly sacrifices offered before a wedding, cf. 227 below. The "wedding" to which these

against Alexander[13] by the mightier power, Zeus
god of hospitality,[14] who thus, for the sake of a woman of
many men,
was to impose many limb-wearying struggles,
with the knee pressed down into the dust
and the spearshaft shattered
in the pre-nuptial rites,[15] upon the Danaans[16]
and the Trojans alike. It is now
where it is, and it is being fulfilled according to destiny:
neither by the kindling of flames nor by the pouring on
of fireless offerings[17]
will he[18] charm away that stubborn anger.
But we, who because of our ancient flesh could not then
contribute
to the force in support, and were left behind,
remain here, guiding
our childlike strength upon staffs.
For the immature marrow[19]
that rules in a child's breast
is like that of an old man, and there is no Ares[20] in that
realm;

sacrifices/battles are preliminary is the reunion of Helen and Menelaus (so rightly Bollack).

[16] Another regular Homeric term for the Greek army attacking Troy.

[17] The first phrase refers to the sacrifice of animals (certain parts of which were burned on the altar), the second to libations.

[18] i.e. Paris, if the text is sound; but a simple emendation will give the sense "will you" (i.e. "will one").

[19] The μυελός (a term that covered brain-matter as well as bone-marrow) was conceived as "the vital fluid which is the stuff of life" (H. Lloyd-Jones in R. D. Dawe et al. ed. *Dionysiaca* [Cambridge, 1978] 51) and is sometimes actually called αἰών "life" (e.g. Pindar fr. 111).

[20] i.e. none of the spirit and strength needed for warfare.

τό θ' ὑπεργήρων, φυλλάδος ἤδη
κατακαρφομένης, τρίποδας μὲν ὁδούς
στείχει, παιδὸς δ' οὐδὲν ἀρείων
ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει.
σὺ δέ, Τυνδάρεω
θύγατερ, βασίλεια Κλυταιμήστρα,
τί χρέος; τί νέον; τί δ' ἐπαισθομένη,
τίνος ἀγγελίας
πειθοῖ περίπεμπτα θυοσκεῖς;
πάντων δὲ θεῶν τῶν ἀστυνόμων,
ὑπάτων, χθονίων, τῶν τε θυραίων
τῶν τ' ἀγοραίων,
βωμοὶ δώροισι φλέγονται·
ἄλλη δ' ἄλλοθεν οὐρανομήκης
λαμπὰς ἀνίσχει
φαρμασσομένη χρίματος ἀγνοῦ
μαλακαῖς ἀδόλοισι παρηγορίαις,
πελανῷ μυχόθεν βασιλείῳ.
τούτων λέξασ' ὅ τι καὶ δυνατὸν
καὶ θέμις, αἴνει παιών τε γενοῦ
τῆσδε μερίμνης,

79 *τό θ' ὑπεργήρων z*: τόθιπεργήρως V *f*: τίθιπεργήρως M.
87 *θυοσκεῖς* Turnebus: *θυοσκοεῖς* γρΣ^{Tr}: *θυοσκινεῖς* vel sim. codd.
89 *τε θυραίων* Enger: *τ' οὐρανίων* codd.
98 *αἴνει* Wieseler: *αἰνεῖν* M V: *εἰπεῖν f*.

while extreme old age, its leaves already
withering, walks its way
on three feet,[21] no stronger than a child,
a dream-vision wandering through the day.

They turn towards the palace.

But, daughter of Tyndareos, queen Clytaemestra,
what is happening? what is the news? what are you
aware of,
what message has persuaded you,
that you have sent round word to make sacrifices?
The altars of all the city's protecting gods,
the gods above and the gods of earth, the gods of the
doors[22]
and the gods of the assembly-place,
are ablaze with gifts;
in every place a flame rises up heaven-high,
medicined by the gentle guileless comfort
of pure anointing oil,
a thick-flowing offering from the inner stores of the
palace.
Explain to us as much of this as is possible
and proper; consent, and be a healer
of this concern of ours,

[21] Doubtless an allusion to the riddle of the Sphinx, which may have featured already in the epic *Oedipodeia* (fr. 2 West) and some words from which appear on a cup of 470–460 BC in the Vatican (*LIMC* Oidipous 19) showing Oedipus before the Sphinx.

[22] Notably Apollo Agyieus, whose pillar and altar stood in front of the palace (cf. 1081 below).

ἢ νῦν τοτὲ μὲν κακόφρων τελέθει,
τοτὲ δ' ἐκ θυσιῶν ἀγανὴ φανθεῖσ'
ἐλπὶς ἀμύνει φροντίδ' ἄπληστον
καὶ θυμοβόρον φρενὶ λύπην.

στρ. α κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν ὄδιον κράτος αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν
ἐντελέων—ἔτι γὰρ θεόθεν καταπνείει
πειθώ, μολπᾶν ἀλκάν, σύμφυτος αἰών—
ὅπως Ἀχαιῶν δίθρονον κράτος, Ἑλλάδος ἥβας
ξύμφρονα ταγάν,
πέμπει ξὺν δορὶ καὶ χερὶ πράκτορι
θούριος ὄρνις Τευκρίδ' ἐπ' αἶαν,
οἰωνῶν βασιλεὺς βασιλεῦσι νε-
ῶν, ὁ κελαινὸς ὅ τ' ἐξόπιν ἀργᾶς,
φανέντες ἴκταρ μελάθρων χερὸς ἐκ δορυπάλτου

101 *φανθεῖσ'* Pauw: *φαίνεισ* M: *φαίνει* V: *φαίνουσ' f.*
103 *καὶ* Blaydes: *τὴν* codd.
103 *θυμοβόρον f* iΣM: *θυμοφθόρον* M V.
103 *φρενὶ λύπην* Pauw, cf. ΣM: *λύπης φρένα* codd.
105 *ἐντελέων* Auratus: *ἐκτελέων* codd.
105 *-πνείει* Ald.: *-πνεύει* (*-πνέει* Mpc) codd.
109 *ἥβας* iΣM, Aristophanes *Frogs* 1285: *ἥβαν* vel sim. codd.
111 *καὶ χερὶ* Aristophanes *Frogs* 1289: *δίκας* codd.
115 *ἀργᾶς* Blomfield: *ἀργίας* (*ἀρίας* Mac?) codd.

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23 lit. "of the auspicious on-the-road command <consisting> of men in power".

24 The idea, found in other passages of tragedy (most clearly in Sophocles, *Ajax* 623), is that "a man's lifetime is born, grows up, and ages with him" (Fraenkel).

25 "Persuasion is to song what valour . . . is to the warrior" (Rose).

which, as it is, at one moment makes our thoughts
sorrowful,
while at another, because of the sacrifices, gentle Hope
manifests herself, and wards off our insatiable worries
and the grief that eats at our inward soul.

They turn back towards the audience.

I have authority to tell of the auspicious departure of the
commanders,
men invested with power[23]—for the age that was born
with me[24] still
inspires me divinely with persuasion, the singer's
prowess[25]—
how the twin-throned rulers of the Achaeans, leading in
concord
the youth of Greece,
were sped with avenging spear and hand
to the Teucrian[26] land by a fierce warlike bird of omen,
the king of birds appearing to the kings of ships,
one black, one white in the hind parts,[27]
near the house,[28] on the side of the spear-wielding
hand,[29]

[26] i.e. Trojan (from Teucer, an early ruler of what was to become the territory of Troy, whose daughter is sometimes said to have been an ancestress of Priam). [27] Evidently the species of eagle known to Aristotle (*HA* 618b18–22, 26–31) as μελανάετος (or λαγωφόνος) and πύγαργος respectively.

[28] In context this must refer to the palace at Argos: see *Museum Criticum* 30/31 (1995/6) 87–94.

[29] i.e. the right side (indicating that the omen was a favourable one).

παμπρέπτοις ἐν ἕδραισιν,
βοσκόμενοι λαγίναν ἐρικύμονα φέρματι γένναν,
βλαβέντα λοισθίων δρόμων.
αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τό δ' εὖ νικάτω.

ἀντ. α κεδνὸς δὲ στρατόμαντις ἰδὼν δύο λήμασι δισσοὺς
Ἀτρείδας μαχίμους ἐδάη λαγοδαίτας,
πομποὺς ἀρχᾶς· οὕτω δ' εἶπε τεράζων·
"χρόνῳ μὲν ἀγρεῖ Πριάμου πόλιν ἅδε κέλευθος,
πάντα δὲ πύργων
κτήνη πρόσθε τὰ δημιοπληθέα
Μοῖρα λαπάξει πρὸς τὸ βίαιον·
οἷον μή τις ἄγα θεόθεν κνεφά-
σῃ προτυπὲν στόμιον μέγα Τροίας
στρατωθέν. οἴκτῳ γὰρ ἐπίφθονος Ἄρτεμις ἁγνὰ
πτανοῖσιν κυσὶ πατρὸς
αὐτότοκον πρὸ λόχου μογερὰν πτάκα θυομένοισιν,
στυγεῖ δὲ δεῖπνον αἰετῶν."
αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τό δ' εὖ νικάτω.

124 πομποὺς Thiersch: πομπούς τ' codd.
131 ἄγα Hermann: ἄτα codd.
134 οἴκτῳ Auratus, Scaliger: οἴκῳ vel sim. codd.

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30 Menelaus in the *Iliad* is a gentler, more sympathetic soul than Agamemnon (see e.g. *Iliad* 6.45–65, 17.669–672, 23.597–600), and in 410–426 below he will be presented as mentally enslaved to the image of his lost wife; he is thus appropriately rep-

settling where they were conspicuous to all,
eating a scion of the hare tribe, pregnant with many offspring,
her final run cut short.
Cry sorrow, sorrow, but may good prevail!

And the worthy prophet to the army saw it, and recognized the two
warlike Atreidae, different in their temper,[30] in the feasters on the hare
who sped the rulers on their way; and thus he spoke, interpreting the portent:
"In time this expedition will capture the city of Priam,
and in front of their walls
Destiny will violently plunder
all the mass of livestock the community possesses:
only let no divine resentment overshadow
the great curb of Troy,[31] striking it before it can act,
once it has been mustered. For holy Artemis, out of pity, bears a grudge
against the winged hounds of her Father
who slaughtered the wretched hare, litter and all, before it could give birth;
she loathes the eagles' feast."
(Cry sorrow, sorrow, but may good prevail!)

resented, in contrast with his brother, by an eagle that is partly white, white being in Greek imagination and art the colour for depicting femininity.

31 i.e. the army, as στρατωθέν "mustered" presently makes clear.

ἐπῳδ. "τόσον περ εὔφρων ἁ καλὰ
δρόσοις ἀέπτοις μαλερῶν λεόντων
πάντων τ' ἀγρονόμων φιλομάστοις
θηρῶν ὀβρικάλοισι τερπνά·
τούτων αἰτεῖ ξύμβολα κρᾶναι.
δεξιὰ μέν, κατάμομφα δὲ φάσματα †στρουθῶν†.
ἰήιον δὴ καλέω Παιῶνα,
μή τινας ἀντιπνόους Δαναοῖς χρονίας ἐχενῆδας
ἁπλοίας
τεύξῃ, σπευδομένα θυσίαν ἑτέραν, ἄνομόν τιν',
ἄδαιτον,
νεικέων τέκτονα σύμφυτον, οὐ δει-
σήνορα· μίμνει γὰρ φοβερὰ παλίνορτος
οἰκονόμος δολία, μνάμων Μῆνις τεκνόποινος."
τοιάδε Κάλχας ξὺν μεγάλοις ἀγαθοῖς ἀπέκλαγξεν
μόρσιμ' ἀπ' ὀρνίθων ὀδίων οἴκοις βασιλείοις·
τοῖς δ' ὁμόφωνον
αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τό δ' εὖ νικάτω.

στρ. β Ζεὺς ὅστις ποτ' ἐστίν, εἰ τόδ' αὐ-
τῷ φίλον κεκλημένῳ,

140 ἁ καλὰ *f*: καλὰ M V.
141 λεόντων Pearson, cf. *Et.Mag.* 377.40: ὄντων M V: om. *f*.
145 στρουθῶν M V: τῶν στρουθῶν *f*: κρίνω Page.
146 δὴ H. L. Ahrens: δὲ codd.

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32 Calchas, who as a prophet is a servant of Apollo, begs his patron god to intercede with his sister Artemis.

"So very kindly disposed is the Fair One
to the unfledged seed of fiery lions,
and so delightsome to the suckling whelps
of all beasts that roam the wild:
she demands to bring about a counterpart to this.
<I interpret> the portent as auspicious but not
unblemished.
So I call on the healer Paeon:[32]
let her not cause any persistent adverse winds that hold
back the Danaan ships
from sailing, bent on another sacrificial slaughter, one
without music or feasting,
a fashioner of strife, bred in the race, not fearing
any man; for there awaits, to arise hereafter, a fearsome,
guileful keeper of the house, a Wrath that remembers
and will avenge a child."[33]
Such were the words that Calchas cried forth, together
with great blessings,
words fateful for the royal house, prompted by the birds
seen by the way;
and in unison with them
cry sorrow, sorrow, but may good prevail!

Zeus—whoever he may be, if it pleases him
to be so called,

[33] In Calchas' oracular words—unintelligible to his original hearers, and mostly also to the Elders now, but easily interpretable by the audience—the coming sacrifice of Iphigeneia is half-identified with the wrath it will generate, which in turn is half-identified with the person (a "guileful keeper of the house . . . that . . . will avenge a child") in whom that wrath will reside.

τοῦτό νιν προσεννέπω·
οὐκ ἔχω προσεικάσαι
πάντ' ἐπισταθμώμενος
πλὴν Διός, εἰ τὸ μάταν ἀπὸ φροντίδος ἄχθος
χρὴ βαλεῖν ἐτητύμως.

ἀντ. β οὔθ' ὅστις πάροιθεν ἦν μέγας,
παμμάχῳ θράσει βρύων,
οὐδὲ λέξεται πρὶν ὤν·
ὅς τ' ἔπειτ' ἔφυ, τριακ-
τῆρος οἴχεται τυχών·
Ζῆνα δέ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων
τεύξεται φρενῶν τὸ πᾶν,

στρ. γ τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδώ-
σαντα, τὸν "πάθει μάθος"
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.
στάζει δ' ἀνθ' ὕπνου πρὸ καρδίας
μνησιπήμων πόνος· καὶ παρ' ἄ-

165 τὸ Pauw: τόδε M V *f*: γε *z*.
168 οὔθ' Prien: οὐδ' codd. 170 οὐδὲ λέξεται H. L. Ahrens: οὐδὲν λέξαι M V *f*: οὐδέν τι λέξαι *z*.
171 ὅς τ' Haupt: ὃς δ' codd.
176 τὸν Schütz: τῷ vel sim. codd.
179 ἀνθ' ὕπνου Emperius: ἔν θ' ὕπνῳ vel sim. codd.

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34 Uranus, grandfather of Zeus.
35 Cronus, father of Zeus.

then I address him by that name:
I have nothing to compare,
though I weigh everything in the balance
except Zeus, if one is truly to cast away
the vain burden of anxiety.

The one who was formerly great,[34]
swelling with proud confidence he could fight any foe,
will now not even be spoken of as existing in the past;
and he who was born later[35]
has met his conqueror,[36] and is gone.
One who gladly utters loud songs of victory to Zeus
will score a perfect hit on the target of wisdom—

Zeus who set mortals on the road
to understanding, who made
"learning by suffering" into an effective law.[37]
There drips before the heart,[38] instead of sleep,
the misery of pain recalled: good sense comes to men

36 lit. "thrice-thrower", i.e. conqueror in a wrestling match.

37 I take this to mean that Zeus, in contrast with his predecessor Cronus (whose reign was traditionally a toil-free golden age; cf. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 109–119), first caused humans to suffer and thus made it possible for them to learn from (their own or others') bitter experience. See my article in H. D. Jocelyn ed. *Tria Lustra: Essays and Notes Presented to John Pinsent* (Liverpool, 1993) 109–114.

38 "Drips" evokes the irritating noise of dripping water (e.g. from eaves after rain, or from a leaky roof) which may keep one awake at night (cf. 559–561, and 891–3 on another irritating nocturnal noise); the heart is mentioned as being the seat of thought and emotion.

κοντας ἦλθε σωφρονεῖν.
δαιμόνων δέ που χάρις βίαιος
σέλμα σεμνὸν ἡμένων.

ἀντ. γ και τόθ' ἡγεμὼν ὁ πρέσ-
βυς νεῶν Ἀχαικῶν,
μάντιν οὔτινα ψέγων,
ἐμπαίοις τύχαισι συμπνέων,
εὖτ' ἀπλοίᾳ κεναγγεῖ βαρύ-
νοντ' Ἀχαικὸς λεώς,
Χαλκίδος πέραν ἔχων παλιρρόχ-
θοις ἐν Αὐλίδος τόποις·

στρ. δ πνοαὶ δ' ἀπὸ Στρυμόνος μολοῦσαι
κακόσχολοι, νήστιδες, δύσορμοι,
βροτῶν ἄλαι, ναῶν τε καὶ πεισμάτων ἀφειδεῖς,
παλιμμήκη χρόνον τιθεῖσαι
τρίβῳ κατέξαινον ἄνθος Ἀργεί-
ων· ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ πικροῦ

182 βίαιος Turnebus: βιαίως codd.
190–1 παλιρρόχθοις H. L. Ahrens: παλ(λ)ιρρόθοις codd.
195 τε Porson: om. codd.

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39 σέλμα "thwart, ship's bench" here refers specifically to the bench on which the helmsman sat (equivalent to the ζυγόν of 1618 below, whose occupant "command[s] the ship").

40 The sentence of which this phrase is the subject loses its way in a jungle of subordinate clauses, and the main verb is never reached; a fresh start is made at 205.

even against their will.
This favour from the gods who sit on the august bench
of command[39]
comes, one must say, by force.

And then the senior leader
of the Achaean fleet,[40]
not criticizing any prophet,
blowing together with the blast[41] of fortune that struck
him,
when the Achaean host was grievously afflicted
by foul weather which emptied their stomachs,
while it stayed on the mainland opposite Chalcis,
in the place where the waters surge back and forth,[42] at
Aulis;

and winds coming from the Strymon[43]
bringing unwelcome leisure, hunger, and bad anchorage,
making men wander,[44] unsparing of ships and cables,
making time seem twice as long,
wore down and shredded the flower of the Argives;
and when the prophet

41 Or, to use a metaphor more familiar in English, "swimming with the tide".

42 The violent currents in the Euripus strait, and their frequent changes of direction, were proverbial. Cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 90c; Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 90; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1167b7.

43 i.e. northerly winds blowing from Thrace.

44 sc. to forage for food; cf. *Odyssey* 4.368–9, 12.330–2, likewise said of weather-bound crews.

χείματος ἄλλο μῆχαρ
βριθύτερον πρόμοισιν
μάντις ἔκλαγξεν, προφέρων
Ἄρτεμιν, ὥστε χθόνα βάκ-
τροις ἐπικρούσαντας Ἀτρεί-
δας δάκρυ μὴ κατασχεῖν·

ἀντ. δ ἄναξ δ' ὁ πρέσβυς τόδ' εἶπε φωνῶν·
"βαρεῖα μὲν κὴρ τὸ μὴ πιθέσθαι,
βαρεῖα δ' εἰ τέκνον δαΐξω, δόμων ἄγαλμα,
μιαίνων παρθενοσφάγοισιν
ῥείθροις πατρῴους χέρας πέλας βω-
μοῦ· τί τῶνδ' ἄνευ κακῶν;
πῶς λιπόναυς γένωμαι
ξυμμαχίας ἁμαρτών;
παυσανέμου γὰρ θυσίας
παρθενίου θ' αἵματος ὀρ-

206 πιθέσθαι Turnebus: πειθέσθαι M V: πείθεσθαι *f.*
210–1 πέλας βωμοῦ Blomfield: βωμοῦ πέλας codd.
212 πῶς λιπόναυς *z*: τί· πῶς λ(ε)ιπόναυς τε M V *f.*

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45 This seems to imply that at first Calchas had refrained from stating that Artemis was responsible for the adverse winds and that the fleet could not sail for Troy unless Iphigeneia was sacrificed; the sacrifice will then be called "another remedy" in contrast to remedies that had already been tried without success (such as, say, animal sacrifices to the wind-god Boreas).

46 Agamemnon puts the alternative in the worst possible light. In fact it is, and was, neither cowardly nor criminal for a com-

also cried forth another
remedy for the hateful storms,
one more grievous for the leaders, declaring
Artemis as their cause,[45] so that the Atreidae
struck the ground with their staffs
and could not hold back their tears—

and the senior king spoke, and said this:
"It is a grievous doom not to comply,
and a grievous one if I am to slay my child, the delight of
my house,
polluting a father's hands
with streams of a slaughtered maiden's blood close by
the altar. Which of these options is free from evil?
How can I become a deserter of the fleet,[46]
losing my alliance?[47]
That they should long with intense passion
for a sacrifice to end the winds

mander to abandon or discontinue a military enterprise when its aims clearly cannot be fulfilled except at ruinous material or moral cost; see Sommerstein *AT* 363–5.

[47] The phrase *ξυμμαχίας ἁμαρτών* could probably also mean "failing in my obligations to my allies"; but nothing in this play, or even in the *Iliad*, suggests that Agamemnon is under any relevant obligation to any of his allies except perhaps Menelaus—and Menelaus, we know (cf. 202–4 above), was as distressed by Calchas' declaration as Agamemnon was. The rendering adopted here, which is easier grammatically, will refer to the possible loss of Agamemnon's hegemonic position after the blow to his prestige that would result from the abandonment of a great undertaking to which he had set his hand.

γᾷ περιόργῳ σφ' ἐπιθυ-
μεῖν θέμις. εὖ γὰρ εἴη."

στρ. ε ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνάγκας ἔδυ λέπαδνον,
φρενὸς πνέων δυσσεβῆ τροπαίαν
ἄναγνον, ἀνίερον, τόθεν
τὸ παντότολμον φρονεῖν μετέγνω·
βροτοὺς θρασύνει γὰρ αἰσχρόμητις
τάλαινα παρακοπὰ πρωτοπήμων.
ἔτλα δ' οὖν θυτὴρ γενέσ-
θαι θυγατρός, γυναικοποί-
νων πολέμων ἀρωγὰν
καὶ προτέλεια ναῶν.

ἀντ. ε λιτὰς δὲ καὶ κληδόνας πατρῴους
παρ' οὐδὲν αἰῶ τε παρθένειον
ἔθεντο φιλόμαχοι βραβῆς·
φράσεν δ' ἀόζοις πατὴρ μετ' εὐχὰν
δίκαν χιμαίρας ὕπερθε βωμοῦ
πέπλοισι περιπετῆ παντὶ θυμῷ
προνωπῆ λαβεῖν ἀέρ-
δην, στόματός τε καλλιπρῴ-

216 περιόργῳ σφ' Bamberger: περιόργως codd.
222 βροτοὺς Portus: βροτοῖς codd.
229 αἰῶ τε K. O. Müller: αἰῶνα codd.

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[48] For this meaning of θέμις cf. *Iliad* 9.134 (it is θέμις for men and women to have sex), *Odyssey* 14.130 (it is θέμις for a woman

and for the blood of a maiden
is quite natural.[48] May all be well!"

And when he put on the yokestrap of necessity,
his mental wind veering in a direction that was impious,
impure, unholy, from that point
he turned to a mindset that would stop at nothing;
for men are emboldened by miserable Infatuation,
whose shameful schemes are the beginning of their
sufferings.
In short, he brought himself to become
the sacrificer of his daughter, to further
a war of revenge over a woman
and as a preliminary rite[49] to the fleet's departure.

Her pleas, her cries of "father!",
and her maiden years, were set at naught
by the war-loving chieftains.
After a prayer, her father told his attendants
to lift her right up over the altar
with all their strength, like a yearling goat,
face down, so that her robes fell around her,
and by putting a guard

to grieve when her husband has perished abroad). At the same time, Agamemnon's use of the word is of assistance in persuading himself that he is doing the right thing.

49 lit. "pre-nuptial rite" (cf. 65 above), probably with allusion (as in 1524 below) to the marriage to Achilles under pretence of which Iphigeneia had been summoned to Aulis (*Cypria* Arg. 8 West).

ρου φυλακᾷ κατασχεῖν
φθόγγον ἀραῖον οἴκοις,

στρ. ζ βίᾳ χαλινῶν τ' ἀναύδῳ μένει.
κρόκου βαφὰς δ' ἐς πέδον χέουσα
ἔβαλλ' ἕκαστον θυτήρων ἀπ' ὄμματος βέλει
φιλοίκτῳ, πρέπουσα τὼς
ἐν γραφαῖς, προσεννέπειν
θέλουσ', ἐπεὶ πολλάκις
πατρὸς κατ' ἀνδρῶνας εὐτραπέζους
ἐμελψεν, ἁγνᾷ δ' ἀταύρωτος αὐδᾷ πατρὸς
φίλου τριτόσπονδον εὔποτμον παι-
ῶνα φίλως ἐτίμα.

ἀντ. ζ τὰ δ' ἔνθεν οὔτ' εἶδον οὔτ' ἐννέπω·
τέχναι δὲ Κάλχαντος οὐκ ἄκραντοι.

236 φυλακᾷ Blomfield: φυλακὰν codd.
242 τὼς Maas: θ' ὡς codd.
246 εὔποτμον Mpc: εὐπόταμον Mac V *f*: εὔποτον *z*.
246–7 παιῶνα Hartung: αἰῶνα codd.

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50 lit. "on her fair-prowed mouth", equating Iphigeneia's body to a ship and her head to its bows.

51 A sacrificial victim had to be seen to go to death willingly; an act or sound indicating reluctance or resistance would invalidate the sacrifice—and here, where the victim was human, would make it a blatant act of murder. Agamemnon's orders for his daughter-victim to be forcibly kept silent of course prove completely ineffective in preventing a "curse on his house".

52 Iphigeneia, who had expected to be the central figure of a

on her fair face and lips[50] to restrain
speech that might lay a curse on his house[51]—

by force, by the silencing power of a bridle.
As she poured saffron dye towards the ground[52]
she cast on each of her sacrificers a glance darted from
her eye,
a glance to stir pity, standing out as if
in a picture, wanting to address them
by name—because[53] often
at the rich banquets in her father's dining-chambers
she had sung, a pure virgin[54] with pure voice,
duly and lovingly performing her father's
paean for good fortune to accompany the third
libation.[55]

What followed I did not see and do not say;
but the skilled prophecies of Calchas do not[56] fail of
fulfilment.

joyful celebration, is wearing a κροκωτός, "a woman's most attractive and dressy costume" (L. M. Stone, *Costume in Aristophanic Comedy* [New York, 1981] 175); as she is held aloft, its folds fall towards the ground in a splash of yellow.

[53] This clause explains how Iphigeneia knew the names of the Greek leaders.

[54] lit. "unbulled"; possibly a technical cultic term for a sacrificial heifer.

[55] To Zeus the Saviour; cf. on *Supp.* 26.

[56] Or "did not", in which case "what followed" will be a euphemistic reference to the actual slaying of Iphigeneia, and the event vindicating Calchas' prophecy will be the changing of the wind; with the rendering adopted here, the chorus elide the slaying altogether as their thoughts move forward to the war itself, which Calchas had predicted (126–130) would be long but victorious.

Δίκα δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσιν μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει·
τὸ μέλλον δ' ἐπει γένοιτ'
ἂν κλύοις· πρὸ χαιρέτω·
ἴσον δὲ τῷ προστένειν·
τορὸν γὰρ ἥξει σύνορθρον αὐγαῖς.
πέλοιτο δ' οὖν τἀπὶ τούτοισιν εὖ πρᾶξις, ὡς
θέλει τόδ' ἄγχιστον Ἀπίας γαί-
ας μονόφρουρον ἔρκος.

ἥκω σεβίζων σόν, Κλυταιμήστρα, κράτος·
δίκη γάρ ἐστι φωτὸς ἀρχηγοῦ τίειν
γυναῖκ', ἐρημωθέντος ἄρσενος θρόνου.
σὺ δ' εἴ τι κεδνὸν εἴτε μὴ πεπυσμένη
εὐαγγέλοισιν ἐλπίσιν θυηπολεῖς,
κλύοιμ' ἂν εὔφρων· οὔτε σιγώσῃ φθόνος.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

εὐάγγελος μέν, ὥσπερ ἡ παροιμία,
ἕως γένοιτο μητρὸς εὐφρόνης πάρα.

251 δ' Elmsley: om. codd.
254 *σύνορθρον* Wellauer, *αὐγαῖς* Hermann: *συνορθὸν αὐ-ταῖς* vel sim. M V: *σύναρθρον ἀϋταῖς f.*
261 *εἴ τι* Auratus: *εἰτὸ* M: *εἴτε* M^{s} V *f.*

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[57] Presumably the Trojans. The particle *μέν* indicates that the events which have been narrated also have implications for the fate of the Greeks, and the vague expressions that follow hint that these implications may be unpleasant.

Over the one side[57] Justice looms, that they may suffer
and learn.
The future one will hear about
when it happens; till then, leave it be—
but that's as much as to say, "lament it in advance"—
for it will all come clear together with the rays of dawn.
At any rate, may the sequel produce a good outcome,
as is the wish of this closest guardian,
this sole bulwark of the land of Apia.[58]

CLYTAEMESTRA has appeared at the palace door.

I have come, Clytaemestra, in reverence towards your power; for it is proper to honour the wife of one's paramount ruler when the male throne is unoccupied. I would be glad to hear if you have learned any good news, or if you have not but are sacrificing in hope of receiving good tidings—but I will bear no grudge if you keep silence.

CLYTAEMESTRA

In accordance with the proverb,[59] may a morning of good news be born from the womb of this night of good news!

[58] i.e. Argos (cf. *Supp.* 117, 260–270). The "closest guardian . . . sole bulwark" is most likely Clytaemestra, who is probably just coming into view through the door; if so, the Elders evidently know nothing that would lead them to be suspicious of her loyalty. The alternative is to take these phrases to refer to the Elders themselves; but "May all turn out well, as we wish it to" would be a pointless tautology.

[59] The precise tenor of the proverb referred to is unknown; it may merely be the familiar generalization "like breeds like" or something more specific, e.g. about a tendency for one piece of good news to follow rapidly after another.

πεύσῃ δὲ χάρμα μεῖζον ἐλπίδος κλυεῖν·
Πριάμου γὰρ ᾑρήκασιν Ἀργεῖοι πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς φής; πέφευγε τοὔπος ἐξ ἀπιστίας.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

Τροίαν Ἀχαιῶν οὖσαν· ἦ τορῶς λέγω;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χαρά μ' ὑφέρπει δάκρυον ἐκκαλουμένη.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

εὖ γὰρ φρονοῦντος ὄμμα σου κατηγορεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί γὰρ τὸ πιστόν; ἔστι τῶνδέ σοι τέκμαρ;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἔστιν—τί δ' οὐχί;—μὴ δολώσαντος θεοῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πότερα δ' ὀνείρων φάσματ' εὐπειθῆ σέβεις;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οὐ δόξαν ἂν λάβοιμι βριζούσης φρενός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ σ' ἐπίανέν τις ἄπτερος φάτις;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

παιδὸς νέας ὡς κάρτ' ἐμωμήσω φρένας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις;

You are about to learn of a joy greater than one could hope to hear: the Argives have captured the city of Priam!

CHORUS

What are you saying? Your words escaped me, they were so incredible.

CLYTAEMESTRA

That Troy is in the Achaeans' hands: am I expressing myself clearly?

CHORUS

Joy is suffusing me, and calling forth tears.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Yes, your eyes betray your loyalty.

CHORUS

And what has persuaded you of this? Have you any evidence for it?

CLYTAEMESTRA

Of course I have—unless a god has deceived us.

CHORUS

Have you been awed by a persuasive vision in a dream?

CLYTAEMESTRA

I wouldn't accept the mere fancy of a slumbering mind.

CHORUS

Then has some unfledged rumour swelled your head?

CLYTAEMESTRA

You really disparage my intelligence, as if I were a young child!

CHORUS

Within what time has the city actually been sacked?

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

τῆς νῦν τεκούσης φῶς τόδ' εὐφρόνης λέγω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ τίς τόδ' ἐξίκοιτ' ἂν ἀγγέλων τάχος;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

Ἥφαιστος, Ἴδης λαμπρὸν ἐκπέμπων σέλας·
φρυκτὸς δὲ φρυκτὸν δεῦρ' ἀπ' ἀγγάρου πυρὸς
ἔπεμπεν· Ἴδη μὲν πρὸς Ἑρμαῖον λέπας
Λήμνου· μέγαν δὲ πανὸν ἐκ νήσου τρίτον
Ἀθῷον αἶπος Ζηνὸς ἐξεδέξατο·
ὑπερτελής τε, πόντον ὥστε νωτίσαι,
ἰσχὺς πορευτοῦ λαμπάδος πρὸς ἡδονὴν
< >, προσαιθρίζουσα πόμπιμον φλόγα
<
>
πεύκη, τὸ χρυσοφεγγὲς ὥς τις ἥλιος
σέλας παραγγείλασα Μακίστου σκοπαῖς.

282 *ἀγγάρου t*: *ἀγγέλου* codd.
284 *πανὸν* Athenaeus 15.700e: *φανὸν* codd.
287/8 lacuna posited by Paley; 287a (= *trag. adesp.* 260) placed here by Headlam; West restored e.g. *<θεῷ>, προσαιθρίζουσα πόμπιμον φλόγα / <ἵαπτεν, οἴνου δ' εἰσέκελσε μητέρα / Πεπάρηθον· ἔνθα τ' ἄφθονος κατέφθιτ' αὖ> / πεύκη . . . .*
289 *σκοπαῖς* Turnebus: *σκοπάς* codd.

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60 Aeschylus uses the Persian word *ἄγγαρος*, referring to the Persian state messenger service with its relays of mounted couriers (see Herodotus 8.98).

61 Also mentioned by Sophocles, *Philoctetes* 1459; not certainly identifiable.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Within the night, I say, that has just given birth to the present day's light.

CHORUS

And what messenger could come here with such speed?

CLYTAEMESTRA

Hephaestus, sending a bright blaze on its way from Mount Ida; and then from that courier-fire[60] beacon sent on beacon all the way here. Ida sent it to Hermes' crag[61] on Lemnos, and from the island the great flambeau was received, thirdly, by the steep height of Zeus at Athos. Then the mighty travelling torch ‹shot up› aloft to arch over the sea, to the delight ‹of the god›, bringing its message-flame close to the sky, ‹and landed on Peparethos, where again much› pinewood ‹was burned,›[62] which, like another sun, conveyed the message in light of golden brilliance to the watch-heights of Macistus.[63] Nor did Macistus neglect its

[62] Neither grammar nor sense can be made of the sentence 286–9 as the mss. present it, and it is almost certain that something has been lost, particularly since the distance from Athos to Euboea (see next note) would be very long for a single beacon-stage. I translate the gist (rather than the wording) of West's illustrative supplement (*Studies* 181–3): Peparethos (now Skopelos), which he proposes as the lost intermediate beacon-site, is the largest and highest island in its group, and lies directly between Athos and Euboea.

[63] The reference to the Euripus in 292 shows that the scholia are right in identifying Macistus as a mountain in Euboea; the site best placed to receive a signal from Peparethos (or even Athos) and pass one to Messapium (see next note) is Mt Kandili, which stretches above the Euripus shore north-west of the Chalcis narrows.

ὁ δ' οὔ τι μέλλων οὐδ' ἀφρασμόνως ὕπνῳ
νικώμενος παρῆκεν ἀγγέλου μέρος,
ἑκὰς δὲ φρυκτοῦ φῶς ἐπ' Εὐρίπου ῥοὰς
Μεσσαπίου φύλαξι σημαίνει μολόν.
οἱ δ' ἀντέλαμψαν καὶ παρήγγειλαν πρόσω,
γραίας ἐρείκης θωμὸν ἅψαντες πυρί·
σθένουσα λαμπὰς δ' οὐδέ πω μαυρουμένη
ὑπερθοροῦσα πεδίον Ἀσώπου δίκην
φαιδρᾶς σελήνης πρὸς Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας
ἤγειρεν ἄλλην ἐκδοχὴν πομποῦ πυρός.
φάος δὲ τηλέπομπον οὐκ ἠναίνετο
φρουρά, πλέον καίουσα τῶν εἰρημένων·
λίμνην δ' ὑπὲρ Γοργῶπιν ἔσκηψεν φάος,
ὄρος δ' ἐπ' αἰγίπλαγκτον ἐξικνούμενον
ὥτρυνε θεσμὸν †μὴ χαρίζεσθαι† πυρός·
πέμπουσι δ' ἀνδαίοντες ἀφθόνῳ μένει
φλογὸς μέγαν πώγωνα, καὶ Σαρωνικοῦ
πορθμοῦ κατόπτην πρῶν' ὑπερβάλλειν πρόσω
φλέγουσαν· εἶτ' ἔσκηψεν, εἶτ' ἀφίκετο

304 *μὴ χαρίζεσθαι* M V*f*: *δὴ χαρίζεσθαι z*: *μὴ χρονίζεσθαι* anon. 307 *κατόπτην* Headlam: *κάτοπτρον* codd.

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64 In the territory of the Boeotian port of Anthedon (Strabo 9.2.13), which lay on the coast north-east of Thebes.

65 The principal river of Boeotia, which separates Thebes from Plataea and Mt Cithaeron to the south.

66 This mountain is best identified (see J. H. Quincey, *JHS* 83 [1963] 129–132) with Mt Aegaleos (etymologized as if from *αἴξ* "goat" and *ἀλᾶσθαι* "wander") between Athens and Eleusis; the

part in transmitting the message, either by dilatoriness or through being heedlessly vanquished by sleep: far over the waters of the Euripus the beacon-light announced its coming to the watchmen of Messapium.[64] They lit up in response and passed the message further on, kindling with fire a heap of old heather; and the torch, powerful and still not weakened, leaped over the plain of the Asopus[65] like the shining moon, came to the crags of Cithaeron, and there set in motion its successor stage of the messenger-fire. The watch did not refuse the bidding of the light sent from afar, but kindled more than they had been ordered; and the light swooped over Gorgopis bay and came to the mountain where goats roam,[66] where it stimulated the men not to ‹be slow in fulfilling›[67] the ordinance about the fire. They kindled and sent on, in abundant strength, a great beard of flame, so that it would go on its blazing way right beyond the headland that looks over the Saronic narrows;[68] then it swooped down and arrived at the steep

lake or bay (λίμνη) called Gorgopis ("fierce-eyed" or "Gorgon-eyed") will then be the bay of Eleusis. The mountain has also been identified with Mt Geraneia on the Megara-Corinth border, or with Aegina; but these identifications account less well for αἰγίπλαγκτον, and they make the λίμνη and/or the headland of 306–7 harder to identify plausibly.

67 The transmitted text is corrupt, but this (or "neglect" or the like) must be the sense.

68 If the "mountain roamed by goats" is indeed Aegaleos (see above), the "headland" will probably be Cape Spiri (see Quincey *op.cit.* 132), the most prominent headland between the Isthmus and Epidaurus, which overlooks the ferry-route (πορθμός) between Epidaurus and Aegina—the same waters that are called the πόντος Σαρωνικός in Euripides, *Hippolytus* 1200.

Ἀραχναῖον αἶπος, ἀστυγείτονας σκοπάς·
κἄπειτ' Ἀτρειδῶν εἰς τόδε σκήπτει στέγος
φάος τόδ' οὐκ ἄπαπτον Ἰδαίου πυρός.
τοιοίδε τοί μοι λαμπαδηφόρων νόμοι,
ἄλλος παρ' ἄλλου διαδοχαῖς πληρούμενοι·
νικᾷ δ' ὁ πρῶτος καὶ τελευταῖος δραμών.
τέκμαρ τοιοῦτον σύμβολόν τέ σοι λέγω,
ἀνδρὸς παραγγείλαντος ἐκ Τροίας ἐμοί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θεοῖς μὲν αὖθις, ὦ γύναι, προσεύξομαι·
λόγους δ' ἀκοῦσαι τούσδε καὶ θαυμάσαι
διηνεκῶς θέλοιμ' ἄν, ὡς λέγεις, πάλιν.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

Τροίαν Ἀχαιοὶ τῇδ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.
οἶμαι βοὴν ἄμικτον ἐν πόλει πρέπειν·
ὀξος τ' ἄλειφά τ' ἐγχέας ταὐτῷ κύτει
διχοστατοῦντ' ἂν οὐ φίλω προσεννέποις,
καὶ τῶν ἁλόντων καὶ κρατησάντων δίχα
φθογγὰς ἀκούειν ἐστί, συμφορᾶς διπλῆς.
οἱ μὲν γάρ, ἀμφὶ σώμασιν πεπτωκότες

312 τοιοίδε τοί μοι Schütz: τοιοίδ' ἕτοιμοι (ἔτυμοι *f*) codd.
319 λέγεις V: λέγοις *f*.
323 ἐγχέας Canter: ἐκχέας codd.
324 φίλω Portus: φίλως codd.

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69 This range lies east of Argos, to the north of the Epidaurus road; its highest point (1199 m. / 3934 ft) is about thirteen miles from the city. 70 Alluding to the torch-races (λαμπαδη-

heights of Arachnaeum,[69] the watch-point nearest our city. And then it fell upon this house of the Atreidae, this light directly descended from the fire kindled on Ida. Such, I tell you, were my dispositions for this torch-relay,[70] one after another of them fulfilled in succession: the first and the last runner were alike victorious![71] Such, I tell you, is the evidence and the token that my husband has transmitted to me from Troy.

CHORUS

Lady, I shall pray anew to the gods; but I would like to hear these words again, from beginning to end, as you have spoken them, and to marvel at them.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Today the Achaeans are in possession of Troy. I imagine that the city is marked by shouts and cries that do not blend well. If you pour vinegar and olive oil into the same vessel, they'll keep apart and you'll call them very unfriendly; so too one can hear separately the voices of the conquered and the conquerors—can hear their distinct fortunes. On one side, they have prostrated themselves to embrace the

φορίαι) run by relay teams at Athenian festivals such as the Hephaesteia and the Prometheia.

71 This was trivially true in ordinary torch-races, where every member of the winning team had contributed to the victory and would share in its glory. Here, however, there has been no competition, and some spectators (though not the chorus) may detect a sinister secondary meaning. The fire-message was first started on its journey by Agamemnon, and the last to receive it was Clytaemestra (cf. 316): the message announced Agamemnon's victory over Troy—and for Clytaemestra it was the signal to prepare for the victory we know she will gain over Agamemnon.

ἀνδρῶν κασιγνήτων τε καὶ φυταλμίων
παῖδες γερόντων, οὐκέτ' ἐξ ἐλευθέρου
δέρης ἀποιμώζουσι φιλτάτων μόρον.
τοὺς δ' αὖτε νυκτίπλαγκτος ἐκ μάχης πόνος
νήστεις πρὸς ἀρίστοισιν ὧν ἔχει πόλις
τάσσει, πρὸς οὐδὲν ἐν μέρει τεκμήριον,
ἀλλ' ὡς ἕκαστος ἔσπασεν τύχης πάλον.
ἐν αἰχμάλωτοις Τρωϊκοῖς οἰκήμασιν
ναίουσιν ἤδη, τῶν ὑπαιθρίων πάγων
δρόσων τ' ἀπαλλαχθέντες, ὡς δ' εὐδαίμονες
ἀφύλακτον εὐδήσουσι πᾶσαν εὐφρόνην.
εἰ δ' εὐσεβοῦσι τοὺς πολισσούχους θεοὺς
τοὺς τῆς ἁλούσης γῆς θεῶν θ' ἱδρύματα,
οὐ τἂν ἑλόντες αὖθις ἀνθαλοῖεν ἄν.
ἔρως δὲ μή τις πρότερον ἐμπίπτῃ στρατῷ
πορθεῖν τὰ μὴ χρή, κέρδεσιν νικωμένους·
δεῖ γὰρ πρὸς οἴκους νοστίμου σωτηρίας,
κάμψαι διαύλου θάτερον κῶλον πάλιν.
θεοῖς δ' ἀναμπλάκητος εἰ μόλοι στρατός,

331 *νήστεις z*: *νῆστις f*: *νήστισι* V.
336 δ' *εὐδαίμονες* Stanley: *δυσδαίμονες* codd.
340 *οὐ τἂν ἑλ-* Hermann: *οὐκ ἀνελ-* V: *οὐκ ἄν γ' ἑλ- f*.
340 *ἀνθαλοῖεν* Portus: *ἂν θάνοιεν* V: *αὖ θάνοιεν f*.

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72 lit. "procreative old men" (who might be fathers or grandfathers). Proverbially, in war, it is the old who mourn the young (see e.g. Herodotus 1.87.4); but in the sack of Troy, the old men were killed too (most notoriously Priam), and no Trojan father mourned his child that day.

bodies of husbands and brothers, and children those of their aged progenitors,[72] and from throats that are no longer free they cry out their laments for the death of their dearest. On the other, weary nocturnal patrolling after the battle has led to their mustering, famished, at breakfasts consisting of what the city has available, with no criteria for taking turns, but just as each individual draws fortune's lot.[73] They are now living in captured Trojan dwellings, freed at last from the frosts and dews of the open air, and they will sleep the whole night without needing guards,[74] like happy men. If they act reverently towards the protecting gods of the city and land they have captured,[75] there is no risk, you may be sure, that after capturing it they may become victims in their turn. Only let no desire first fall on the army to plunder what they should not, overcome by the prospect of gain; for they have still to return safely home, turning the bend and coming back for the second leg of the double run.[76] If the army should return without having of-

[73] This implies that in normal circumstances soldiers who messed together would be served in some fixed order (perhaps by age); but on this occasion, when the men were exceptionally hungry and amid the chaos of a captured, massacred city, it would have been a random free-for-all.

[74] Or "without having to do guard duty".

[75] Which they did not, as witness two sacrilegious atrocities known to all—the killing of Priam at the altar of Zeus Herkeios, and the seizure of Cassandra from the temple of Athena.

[76] The metaphor is from the δίαυλος, a race of two stades (about 350–400 metres) run out-and-back on a one-stade track.

παρήγορον τὸ πῆμα τῶν ὀλωλότων
γένοιτ' ἄν, εἰ πρόσπαια μὴ τύχοι κακά.
τοιαῦτά τοι γυναικὸς ἐξ ἐμοῦ κλύεις·
τὸ δ' εὖ κρατοίη μὴ διχορρόπως ἰδεῖν·
πολλῶν γὰρ ἐσθλῶν τὴν ὄνησιν εἰλόμην.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γύναι, κατ' ἄνδρα σώφρον' εὐφρόνως λέγεις.
ἐγὼ δ' ἀκούσας πιστά σου τεκμήρια
θεοὺς προσειπεῖν εὖ παρασκευάζομαι·
χάρις γὰρ οὐκ ἄτιμος εἴργασται πόνων.

ὦ Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ καὶ Νὺξ φιλία
μεγάλων κόσμων κτεάτειρα,
ἥτ' ἐπὶ Τροίας πύργοις ἔβαλες
στεγανὸν δίκτυον, ὡς μήτε μέγαν
μήτ' οὖν νεαρῶν τιν' ὑπερτελέσαι
μέγα δουλείας

346 παρήγορον Kirchhoff: ἐγρήγορον codd.: ἐγρηγορὸς Askew.

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77 The Elders will take this to mean either the pain felt by the spirits of Greek and Trojan dead who have been left unburied, or (more likely, cf. 433–451 below) the pain of Greek families who have lost kinsmen in the war; the audience will perceive that by "the dead" Clytaemestra means primarily Iphigeneia, and that she intends to make sure that an "unexpected stroke of evil fate" *does* occur.

78 The mss.' reading means "awake", but the context, in particular the two conditional clauses each of the form "if [not "even if"]

fended the gods, the pain of the dead[77] would be appeasable,[78] if no unexpected stroke of evil fate occurs. This, I tell you, is what you have heard from me, a woman; but may the good prevail, unequivocally, for all to see! I choose to enjoy that, in preference to many other blessings.[79]

CHORUS

Lady, you have spoken wisely, like a sensible man; and having heard trustworthy evidence from you, I am preparing to address the gods in an appropriate manner, for a reward, which ought not to go unhonoured, has been given in return for our sufferings.

CLYTAEMESTRA goes back into the palace.

O Zeus the King, and friendly Night,
winner of great glories,
you who cast over the walls of Troy
an all-covering net, such that neither an adult
nor yet any of the young could overleap
the great seine of slavery,

all goes well", requires a statement slanted in the direction of safety, not of danger.

[79] One could pray to the gods for new blessings and/or for the continued enjoyment (ὄνησις) of existing blessings, and we sometimes find prayers or wishes for the latter that explicitly exclude the former (e.g. Euripides, *Alcestis* 334, *Hecuba* 996–7). Clytaemestra professes to regard the safe return of the army (and Agamemnon) as so great a boon that, if it is granted, she will be content with it and will not desire more. In fact, of course, the "enjoyment" she will gain from the return of Agamemnon will be of a kind undreamed of by the Elders.

γάγγαμον ἄτης παναλώτου.
Δία τοι ξένιον μέγαν αἰδοῦμαι
τὸν τάδε πράξαντ', ἐπ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ
τείνοντα πάλαι τόξον, ὅπως ἂν
μήτε πρὸ καιροῦ μήθ' ὑπὲρ ἄστρων
βέλος ἠλίθιον σκήψειεν.

στρ. α Διὸς πλαγὰν ἔχουσιν εἰπεῖν·
πάρεστιν τοῦτό γ' ἐξιχνεῦσαι·
ἔπραξεν ὡς ἔκρανεν. οὐκ ἔφα τις
θεοὺς βροτῶν ἀξιοῦσθαι μέλειν,
ὅσοις ἀθίκτων χάρις
πατοῖθ'· ὁ δ' οὐκ εὐσεβής·
πέφανται δ' †ἐγγόνους
ἀτολμήτων ἄρη†
πνεόντων μεῖζον ἢ δικαίως,
φλεόντων δωμάτων ὑπέρφευ,
ὑπὲρ τὸ βέλτιστον. ἔστω δ' ἀπή-
μαντον, ὥστ' ἀπαρκεῖν
εὖ πραπίδων λαχόντι.
οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἔπαλξις
πλούτου πρὸς κόρον ἀνδρὶ

367 ἔχουσιν *z*: ἔχουσ' F^{pc}: ἔχουσαν F^{ac}: ἔχοις ἂν Karsten.
368 τοῦτο (sic) γ' *z*: τοῦτ' *f*.
369 ἔπραξεν Hermann: ὡς ἔπραξεν *f*.
374–5 ἐγγόνους (ἐκγόνους *z*) ἀτολμήτων ἄρη *f*: perh. ἐκγόνοις (Bothe) ἀτολμητῶν ἀρὴ (Headlam).
380 λαχόντι Auratus: λαχόντα *f*.

of ruin and total subjugation!
I revere the greatness of Zeus, god of hospitality,
who brought this about, having long since
bent his bow at Alexander,
so that his shaft might not shoot in vain
either short of the target or above the stars.

They[80] can speak of the blow struck by Zeus;
that can readily be traced to its source.
He did as he ordained. Some used to say
that the gods did not deign to concern themselves
with such mortals as trampled underfoot the grace
of the sacrosanct. They were impious.
Made manifest to future generations
is the ruin that comes from daring what should not be
dared,[81]
when men puff themselves up more than is right,
when a house has abundance in excess,
beyond what is best. Let wealth
be free from pain, enough to suffice
a man of sound mental endowments:
there is no defence[82]
against surfeit of wealth for a man

[80] Or, adopting Karsten's emendation, "You".

[81] The text is corrupt, and this restoration is very uncertain.

[82] lit. "battlement, city wall": the man is imaged as a fortress under siege by Temptation, who eventually storms the wall and "forces her way in" (385).

λακτίσαντι μέγαν Δίκας
βωμὸν εἰς ἀφάνειαν.

ἀντ. α βιᾶται δ' ἃ τάλαινα Πειθώ,
προβούλου παῖς ἄφερτος Ἄτας·
ἄκος δὲ πᾶν μάταιον. οὐκ ἐκρύφθη,
πρέπει δέ, φῶς αἰνολαμπές, σίνος·
κακοῦ δὲ χαλκοῦ τρόπον
τρίβῳ τε καὶ προσβολαῖς
μελαμπαγὴς πέλει
δικαιωθείς, ἐπεὶ
διώκει παῖς ποτανὸν ὄρνιν,
πόλει πρόστριμμα θεὶς ἄφερτον.
λιτᾶν δ' ἀκούει μὲν οὔτις θεῶν,
τὸν δ' ἐπίστροφον τῶν
φῶτα Δίκα καθαιρεῖ.
οἷος καὶ Πάρις ἐλθὼν

383 *μέγαν* Canter: *μεγάλα f.*
386 *προβούλου παῖς* Hartung: *προβουλόπαις f.*
387 *πᾶν μάταιον* Musgrave: *παμμάταιον f.*
391 *τε z*: om. *f.*
391 *προσβολαῖς* Casaubon: *προβολαῖς f.*
394 *ποτανὸν* Schütz: *πτανὸν f*: *πτανόν τιν' z.*
395 *θεὶς ἄφερτον* Wilamowitz: *ἄφερτον θεὶς f*: *ἄφερτον ἐνθείς z.* 397 *τῶν* Klausen: *τῶνδε f.*
398 *φῶτα Δίκα* Blomfield: *φῶτ' ἄδικον f.*

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83 This rendering keeps closest to the sense of the couplet by Solon (fr. 6.3–4 West) to which Aeschylus is alluding: "Surfeit be-

who has kicked the great altar
of Justice into oblivion.[83]

No, miserable Temptation forces her way in,
the unendurable child of scheming Ruin;
every remedy is in vain; the lesion
is not concealed but conspicuous, a lurid-shining light.
Like bad bronze[84]
subjected to wear and knocking,
he turns indelibly black
when he is brought to justice[85]—
for he is a boy chasing a bird on the wing[86]—
and inflicts unendurable harm on his community.[87]
None of the gods hears his prayers,
and Justice destroys
the man who is involved with these things.
Such was Paris, who went

gets *hybris*, when great prosperity comes to men whose minds are not well-balanced." Other grammatically possible renderings are "there is no defence for a man who, from surfeit of wealth, has kicked . . ." and "wealth provides no defence against surfeit for a man who has kicked . . .".

[84] The reference is to bronze adulterated with lead, whose surface soon turns black with use and wear.

[85] i.e. when the criminal is caught and punished, his true character, which he had hoped to conceal, becomes evident to all, just as "wear and knocking" reveals the true nature of the adulterated bronze which, when the vessel was new, had looked no different from top-quality metal. [86] i.e. he is attempting the impossible (in seeking to evade justice).

[87] Which may well suffer collectively (as Troy did) for the crime of one of its members.

ἐς δόμον τὸν Ἀτρειδᾶν
ᾔσχυνε ξενίαν τράπε-
ζαν κλοπαῖσι γυναικός.

στρ. β λιποῦσα δ' ἀστοῖσιν ἀσπίστορας
κλόνους λοχισμούς τε καὶ
ναυβάτας ὁπλισμούς,
ἄγουσά τ' ἀντίφερνον Ἰλίῳ φθοράν,
βεβάκει ῥίμφα διὰ
πυλᾶν, ἄτλητα τλᾶσα· πολλὰ δ' ἔστενον
τόδ' ἐννέποντες δόμων προφῆται·
"ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι,
ἰὼ λέχος καὶ στίβοι φιλάνορες.
πάρεστι σιγὰς ἀτίμους ἀλοιδόρους ἀλίστους ἀφειμένων ἰδεῖν·
πόθῳ δ' ὑπερποντίας
φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν.
εὐμόρφων δὲ κολοσσῶν
ἔχθεται χάρις ἀνδρί·

404 λοχισμούς Heyse: λογχίμους *f.* 408 πολλὰ δ' ἔστενον *z*: πολὺ δ' ἀνέστενον *f.* 410 ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα *z*: ἰὼ δῶμα *f.* 412–3 σιγὰς ἀτίμους Hermann, ἀλοιδόρους Franz, ἀλίστους West (after Tafel), ἀφειμένων Hermann: σιγᾶς ἄτιμος ἀλοίδορος ἄδιστος ἀφεμένων *f.*

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88 Or "the forming of companies".

89 lit. "husband-loving traces" [or "footsteps"]; after λέχος, the picture likely to be conjured up is that of a marital bed still bearing the impress of Helen's body.

90 In the Greek this is plural, though only Menelaus is referred

to the house of the Atreidae
and shamed the table of hospitality
by stealing away a wife.

Leaving to her fellow-citizens the turmoil
of shield-bearing warriors, the setting of ambushes,[88]
the arming of men to go in ships,
bringing destruction to Ilium instead of a dowry,
she went lightly through the gates,
daring to do what she should not have dared; and the
seers of the house
said this, with many a groan:
"Alas for the house, alas for the house and its chiefs!
Alas for the bed and the traces of a loving wife![89]
One can see the deserted,[90] silent, dishonoured,
neither reviling nor praying;
because of his longing for her who is beyond the sea,
a phantom will seem to rule the house.
The charm of beautiful statues[91]
has become hateful to the husband:

to; in the immediate shock of loss, he is apparently stunned into utter speechlessness.

91 These must surely be statues of Helen, with which Menelaus, like many a king in reality and fiction, had adorned his palace to remind himself of the beauty of his wife even when for the moment she was not actually with him; now they have become a mockery and a torment, their dead, painted eyes reminding him that the living woman is gone. If, as many scholars believe, the reference were to any and all statues of beautiful young women, it would not be clear why the sight of *statues* in particular should be said to distress Menelaus, rather than that of attractive maidservants or even of Helen's daughter Hermione, which one might have thought would be even more powerful reminders of his loss.

ὀμμάτων δ' ἐν ἀχηνίαις
ἔρρει πᾶσ' Ἀφροδίτα.

ἀντ. β ὀνειρόφαντοι δὲ πενθήμονες
πάρεισι δόξαι φέρου-
σαι χάριν ματαίαν·
μάταν γάρ, εὖτ' ἂν ἐσθλά τις δοκοῦνθ' ὁρᾷ,
παραλλάξασα διὰ
χερῶν βέβακεν ὄψις, οὐ μεθύστερον
πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦσ' ὕπνου κελεύθοις."
τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκους ἐφ' ἑστίας ἄχη
τάδ' ἐστὶ καὶ τῶνδ' ὑπερβατώτερα·
τὸ πᾶν δ' ἀφ' Ἕλλανος αἴας συνορμένοισι πέν-
θεια τλησικάρδιος
δόμοις ἑκάστου πρέπει.
πολλὰ γοῦν θιγγάνει πρὸς ἦπαρ·
οὓς μὲν γάρ ‹τις› ἔπεμψεν
οἶδεν, ἀντὶ δὲ φωτῶν
τεύχη καὶ σποδὸς εἰς ἑκάσ-
του δόμους ἀφικνεῖται.

423 δοκοῦνθ' ὁρᾷ Salzmann: δοκῶν ὁρᾶν *f.*
426 ὀπαδοῦσ' Dobree: ὀπαδοῖς *f.*
429 Ἕλλανος Bamberger (Ἕλληνος Klausen): ἑλλάδος *f.*
431 δόμοις Portus, cf. Σ^{Tr} οἴκοις: δόμων *f.*
433 οὓς μὲν γάρ ‹τις› Porson: οὓς μὲν γάρ *z*: οὓς μὲν *f.*

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92 A noun πένθεια is not otherwise attested, and its formation is abnormal; nor is it clear whether it should be taken as denoting a

because they lack eyes,
all their loveliness goes for nothing.

Mournful imaginings, seen in dreams,
present themselves, bringing
an empty delight;
for it is empty when one sees what seems a blessing
and then the vision slips aside
through one's arms and is gone, never again
to be a winged companion on the paths of sleep."
These, and even worse than these,
are the sorrows in the house, by the hearth;
but for all alike of those who started together from the land of Greece
a mourning woman,[92] with a heart that endures suffering,
is the outstanding feature in each man's home.
There is much, at any rate, that strikes deep into the soul:[93]
one knows the men one sent off,
but instead of human beings
urns and ashes arrive back
at each man's home.

person (as assumed above) or an abstraction ("the mourning of enduring hearts"). However, the only alternative seriously proposed, *ἀπένθεια* (Blass), strikes a false note here: the sense required is that Helen's departure (and the resulting war) have brought sorrow to every house in Greece just as they have to Menelaus' house, and this sense is not given by a reference to the *absence* of any overt sign of sorrow.

93 lit. "to the liver".

στρ. γ ὁ χρυσαμοιβὸς δ' Ἄρης σωμάτων
καὶ ταλαντοῦχος ἐν μάχᾳ δορὸς
πυρωθὲν ἐξ Ἰλίου
φίλοισι πέμπει βαρὺ
ψῆγμα δυσδάκρυτον, ἀν-
τήνορος σποδοῦ γεμί-
ζων λέβητας εὐθέτους.
στένουσι δ' εὖ λέγοντες ἄν-
δρα τὸν μὲν ὡς μάχας ἴδρις,
τὸν δ' ἐν φοναῖς καλῶς πεσόντ'
"ἀλλοτρίας διαὶ γυναι-
κος". τάδε σῖγά τις βαΰ-
ζει, φθονερὸν δ' ὑπ' ἄλγος ἕρ-
πει προδίκοις Ἀτρείδαις.
οἱ δ' αὐτοῦ περὶ τεῖχος
θήκας Ἰλιάδος γᾶς
εὔμορφοι κατέχουσιν, ἐχ-
θρὰ δ' ἔχοντας ἔκρυψεν.

ἀντ. γ βαρεῖα δ' ἀστῶν φάτις σὺν κότῳ,
δημοκράντου δ' ἀρᾶς τίνει χρέος·

444 εὐθέτους Auratus: εὐθέτου *f*. 448 διαὶ *t*: διὰ *f*: γε διὰ *z*. 457 δημοκράντου Porson: δημοκράτου *f*.

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94 This blends the Homeric picture of the weighing of men's fates (as done by Zeus in *Iliad* 22.209–213; cf. also introductory note to *The Weighing of Souls*) with the image created here of Ares the moneychanger.

95 ψῆγμα normally means "*gold* dust", thus continuing the

Ares, the moneychanger of bodies,
holding his scales[94] in the battle of spears,
sends back from Ilium to their dear ones
heavy dust[95] that has been through the fire,
to be sadly wept over,
filling easily-stowed urns
with ash given in exchange for men.
And they lament, and praise this man
as one expert in battle,
that man as having fallen nobly amid the slaughter—
"because of someone else's wife".
That is what they are snarling, under their breath;
and grief steals over them, mixed with resentment
against the chief prosecutors,[96] the Atreidae.
And over there, around the city wall,
the men in their beauty[97] occupy
sepulchres in the land of Ilium:
the enemy's soil covers its conquerors.

The talk of the citizens, mixed with anger, is a dangerous
thing:
it is the equivalent of[98] a publicly ordained curse:

moneychanger image; gold dust is heavy (compared with a similar bulk of ordinary dust) because of the high density of gold, but *this* dust is "heavy" because of the grief its arrival will cause.

96 The war is imaged as a lawsuit, as at 41 above.

97 As shades in the underworld, as heroes receiving cult, and in the memory of their loved ones, they will for ever remain young and handsome.

98 lit. "it pays the debt of", in the same sense as (for example) five Persian darics might pay a debt of 100 Attic drachmae: angry popular talk and an official public curse are in effect the same thing except that (so to speak) they are measured in different units.

μένει δ' ἀκοῦσαί τί μοι
μέριμνα νυκτηρεφές.
τῶν πολυκτόνων γὰρ οὐκ
ἄσκοποι θεοί, κελαι-
ναὶ δ' Ἐρινύες χρόνῳ
τυχηρὸν ὄντ' ἄνευ δίκας
παλιντυχεῖ τριβᾷ βίου
τιθεῖσ' ἀμαυρόν, ἐν δ' ἀΐσ-
τοις τελέθοντος οὔτις ἀλ-
κά. τὸ δ' ὑπερκόπως κλύειν
εὖ βαρύ· βάλλεται γὰρ ὅσ-
σοις Διόθεν κεραυνός.
κρίνω δ' ἄφθονον ὄλβον·
μήτ' εἴην πτολιπόρθης,
μήτ' οὖν αὐτὸς ἁλόνθ' ὑπ' ἀλ-
λῳ βίον κατίδοιμι.

ἐπῳδ. πυρὸς δ' ὑπ' εὐαγγέλου
πόλιν διήκει θοὰ

459 μοι Karsten: μου *f*. 462 ἄσκοποι *z*: ἀπόσκοποι *f*.
465 παλιντυχεῖ Portus: παλιντυχῆ *z*: παλιντυχῆ *f*.
468 ὑπερκόπως Portus: ὑπερκότως codd.
472 μήτ' . . . πτολιπόρθης *z*: μὴδ' . . . πτολιπόρθις *f*.
473 ἁλόνθ' Margoliouth: ἁλοὺς *f*.
473–4 ἄλλῳ Karsten: ἄλλων *f*.

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99 A veiled reference to the possibility of a *coup d'état* and/or an assassination attempt against one or both of the Atreidae.

I have an anxiety that waits to hear
of something happening under cover of night.[99]
For the gods do not fail to take aim
against those who have killed many, and in time
the black Furies enfeeble him
who has been fortunate against justice,
reversing his fortune and corroding
his life, and when he comes
to the land of the unseen, he has no protection.[100]
And to be excessively praised
is dangerous: a thunderbolt
is launched from the eyes of Zeus.
I prefer a prosperity that attracts no envy:
may I neither be a sacker of cities,
nor myself be captured and see
my life subjected to another.

[*First semichorus*][101]

Prompted by the fire that brought good news,
word has passed swiftly

[100] For the Furies pursue the criminal even beyond death; cf. *Eum.* 175–8, 267–275, 339–340.

[101] This division of the chorus, first proposed by Hermann and K. O. Müller, seems to me unavoidable: the vacillating attitude which is sharply *criticized* in the second part of the epode (479–482)—that of those who first believe and then, for no particular reason, doubt the message of the beacons—is precisely that which is *displayed* in the first and third parts (475–8, 483–8), when we recall how unquestioningly the chorus had believed the news in 351–4 and at the beginning of the present ode.

βάξις· εἰ δ' ἐτήτυμος,
τίς οἶδεν, ἤ τι θεῖον †ἐστιν μὴ† ψύθος;

— τίς ὧδε παιδνὸς ἢ φρενῶν κεκομμένος,
φλογὸς παραγγέλμασιν
νέοις πυρωθέντα καρδίαν ἔπειτ'
ἀλλαγᾷ λόγου καμεῖν;
— γυναικὸς αἰχμᾷ πρέπει
πρὸ τοῦ φανέντος χάριν ξυναινέσαι.
πιθανὸς ἄγαν ὁ θῆλυς ὅρος ἐπινέμεται
ταχύπορος· ἀλλὰ ταχύμορον
γυναικογήρυτον ὄλλυται κλέος.

— τάχ' εἰσόμεσθα λαμπάδων φαεσφόρων
φρυκτωρίας τε καὶ πυρὸς παραλλαγάς,
εἴτ' οὖν ἀληθεῖς εἴτ' ὀνειράτων δίκην
τερπνὸν τόδ' ἐλθὸν φῶς ἐφήλωσεν φρένας.
κήρυκ' ἀπ' ἀκτῆς τόνδ' ὁρῶ κατάσκιον
κλάδοις ἐλαίας· μαρτυρεῖ δέ μοι κάσις

477 ἐτήτυμος Auratus: ἐτητύμως *f*. 478 ἤ τι Dindorf: ἤ τοι *f* (ει F^{sscr}). 478 ἐστὶν μὴ *f*: ἐστι μὴ *z*: ἐστι δὴ Karsten. 482 λόγου *z*: λόγους F. 483 γυναικὸς Scaliger: ἐν γυναικὸς *f*. 490 φρυκτωρίας Wilamowitz: φρυκτωριῶν *f*.

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102 This should mean that he brings good news. At first sight this makes it surprising that the chorus-leader is still sceptical; but good news is not necessarily news of victory—for all the Elders yet know, the Herald might be reporting nothing more than the

through the city; but who knows
whether it is true, or is some divine deception?

[*Second semichorus*]

Who is so childish or so stricken out of his senses
as to have his heart fired up
by the message of the flame when it was fresh, and then
to wilt when the talk changes?

[*First semichorus*]

It is just like a woman in command
to authorize thanksgivings before the situation is clear.
A woman's ordinance is too persuasive, gaining much
ground
and quickly flourishing; but quickly perishing,
a rumour proclaimed by a woman vanishes.

[*The chorus leader speaks, looking off in the seaward direction*]

We shall soon know about the beacon-watches and fire-relays of the travelling light-signals, whether they are indeed telling the truth or whether the coming of this joyful light has beguiled our minds like a dream. I see, coming here from the seashore, a herald, his head shaded with a wreath of olive;[102] and the thirsty dust, the sister and neighbour of

safe return of the army. It will be a long time before he does in fact confirm the message of the beacon; all his early remarks about the war are negative in tone (505, 510–1, 517), and only in the twenty-third line of his speech (525) does he at last announce the destruction of Troy.

πηλοῦ ξύνουρος δυσία κόνις τάδε,
ὡς οὐκ ἄναυδος οὗτος, οὐ δαίων φλόγα
ὕλης ὀρείας σημανεῖ καπνῷ πυρός,
ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ χαίρειν μᾶλλον ἐκβάξει λέγων—
τὸν ἀντίον δὲ τοῖσδ' ἀποστέργω λόγον.
εὖ γὰρ πρὸς εὖ φανεῖσι προσθήκη πέλοι·
χὥστις τάδ' ἄλλως τῇδ' ἐπεύχεται πόλει,
αὐτὸς φρενῶν καρποῖτο τὴν ἁμαρτίαν.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

ἰὼ πατρῷον οὖδας Ἀργείας χθονός,
δεκάτου σε φέγγει τῷδ' ἀφικόμην ἔτους,
πολλῶν ῥαγεισῶν ἐλπίδων μιᾶς τυχών·
οὐ γάρ ποτ' ηὔχουν τῇδ' ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονὶ
θανὼν μεθέξειν φιλτάτου τάφου μέρος.
νῦν χαῖρε μὲν χθών, χαῖρε δ' ἡλίου φάος,
ὕπατός τε χώρας Ζεύς, ὁ Πύθιός τ' ἄναξ,
τόξοις ἰάπτων μηκέτ' εἰς ἡμᾶς βέλη·
ἅλις παρὰ Σκάμανδρον ἦσθ' ἀνάρσιος·
νῦν δ' αὖτε σωτὴρ ἴσθι καὶ παιώνιος,
ἄναξ Ἄπολλον. τούς τ' ἀγωνίους θεοὺς
πάντας προσαυδῶ, τόν τ' ἐμὸν τιμάορον
Ἑρμῆν, φίλον κήρυκα κηρύκων σέβας,

496 οὐκ Enger, οὗτος οὐ Wilamowitz: οὔτ' . . . οὔτέ σοι *f*.
501 χὥστις Wilamowitz: χ^{ὁ} (i.e. ΧΟΡΟΣ) ὅστις vel sim. *f*.
504 δεκάτου Jacob: δεκάτῳ *f*.
511 ἦσθ' Needham: ἦλθ' *f*: ἦλθες *z*.
512 καὶ παιώνιος Dobree: καὶ παγώνιος *f*: κἀπαγώνιος *z*.

mud, testifies to me[103] that he will not signal voicelessly with fire-smoke, kindling a flame with mountain timber, but will say something that will either more definitely proclaim rejoicing for us, or—but I abhor speaking of the opposite alternative; may this be a happy addition to the apparently happy news already come—and whoever expresses his prayer for this city differently, may he himself reap the fruit of his mind's perversity!

Enter HERALD. *He falls down and kisses the ground.*

HERALD

Hail, soil of my fathers, land of Argos! On this day, after nearly ten years,[104] I have come back to you, achieving one of my hopes, after the shipwreck of so many: for I never thought that I would die in this Argive land and be able to share my beloved family tomb. Now greeting to my land, [*raising his hands to sun and sky*] greeting to the light of the sun and to Zeus supreme over the land, to the Pythian lord—and please no longer shoot the shafts of your bow at us; you showed us quite enough hostility by the Scamander;[105] but now, lord Apollo, become a saviour and a healer. And I address all the Assembled Gods,[106] and especially the protector of my own office, Hermes, the Herald

103 The dust-cloud shows that the Herald is coming as fast as he can, and therefore that he has news of great importance.

104 lit. "of the tenth year".

105 Throughout the war Apollo had consistently supported the Trojan cause, but "shoot the shafts of your bow" (510, cf. *Iliad* 1.43–52) and "healer" (512) will make the audience think primarily of the plague sent by Apollo with which the *Iliad* commences.

106 Cf. note on *Supp.* 189.

ἥρως τε τοὺς πέμψαντας, εὐμενεῖς πάλιν
στρατὸν δέχεσθαι τὸν λελειμμένον δορός.
ἰὼ μέλαθρα, βασιλέων φίλαι στέγαι,
σεμνοί τε θᾶκοι, δαίμονές τ' ἀντήλιοι·
520 εἴ πω πάλαι, φαιδροῖσι τοισίδ' ὄμμασιν
δέξασθε κόσμῳ βασιλέα πολλῷ χρόνῳ·
ἥκει γὰρ ὑμῖν φῶς ἐν εὐφρόνῃ φέρων
καὶ τοῖσδ' ἅπασι κοινὸν Ἀγαμέμνων ἄναξ.
ἀλλ' εὖ νιν ἀσπάσασθε, καὶ γὰρ οὖν πρέπει,
525 Τροίαν κατασκάψαντα τοῦ δικηφόρου
526 Διὸς μακέλλῃ, τῇ κατείργασται πέδον
528 καὶ σπέρμα πάσης ἐξαπόλλυται χθονός.

520 εἴ Bourdelot, πω Headlam: ἦ που *f.*
522 ὑμῖν *z*: ἡμῖν *f.*
{527} βωμοὶ δ' ἄϊστοι καὶ θεῶν ἱδρύματα *f*: del. Salzmann.

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107 Cf. Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 2.1.1: "They crossed the frontier, after praying to the gods and heroes who dwelt in the land of Persia to send them forth with favour and kindness; and after crossing it, they prayed again to the gods who dwelt in the land of Media to receive them with favour and kindness."

108 lit. "the spear".

109 This would be understood as referring to stone seats outside the palace where the kings sat to receive petitions, give judgement, etc.; cf. *Odyssey* 3.404–416.

110 From Hesychius α5360 (citing Euripides fr. 538) and Tertullian, *On Idolatry* 15.6, it appears that δαίμονες (or θεοὶ) ἀντήλιοι were divinities who had shrines in front of the entrance to a building; perhaps the term was originally applied to shrines in front of temples (whose entrances normally faced the rising sun) and later generalized. In front of Agamemnon's palace, as in front

whom heralds love and revere, and the heroes who sent us forth,[107] praying that they may receive back with favour the army, or what the war[108] has spared of it. [*Turning towards the palace*] Hail, palace, beloved home of my kings, and august seats,[109] and you deities who face the sun![110] Let these eyes of yours be bright, if they ever have been before, as you welcome your king home in glory at long last; for he has come, bringing light out of darkness to you and to all these people—King Agamemnon! [*Addressing the people of Argos*[111]] Give him a noble welcome, for that is truly proper, when he has dug up Troy with the mattock of Zeus the Avenger, with which the ground has been worked over[112] and the seed of the whole country destroyed.[113]

of many real Athenian houses, there is certainly a shrine of Apollo Agyieus (cf. 1072–87 below) and probably an image of Hermes (see note on *Cho.* 583); we do not know whether there are also shrines of one or more other deities.

111 The actor no doubt delivered the rest of this speech straight at the audience.

112 Here the mss. add "and the altars and the abodes of the gods have disappeared". That this would be an appalling sacrilege to commit, let alone to boast of, is not on its own a reason for rejecting the line; nor is its close resemblance to *Pers.* 811. However, the line interrupts the metaphor of the "mattock of Zeus" which works over the ground (526) and destroys the seed in the soil (528); and *pace* Murray and others, we do not need 527 to tell us that the army has behaved as badly as was feared in 338–344—we knew that already (see note on 338–9). The line was probably added by a producer or actor for a revival in the late fifth century.

113 This expression, like the mattock itself, is figurative; the Trojan "seed" that has been destroyed is Troy's human population (contrast the *βροτείων σπερμάτων σωτηρίαν* which is to be assured to the Athenians, *Eum.* 909).

τοιόνδε Τροίᾳ περιβαλὼν ζευκτήριον
ἄναξ Ἀτρείδης πρέσβυς εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ
ἥκει. τίεσθαι δ' ἀξιώτατος βροτῶν
τῶν νῦν· Πάρις γὰρ οὔτε συντελὴς πόλις
ἐξεύχεται τὸ δρᾶμα τοῦ πάθους πλέον.
ὀφλὼν γὰρ ἁρπαγῆς τε καὶ κλοπῆς δίκην
τοῦ ῥυσίου θ' ἥμαρτε καὶ πανώλεθρον
αὐτόχθονον πατρῷον ἔθρισεν δόμον·
διπλᾶ δ' ἔτεισαν Πριαμίδαι θἁμάρτια.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κῆρυξ Ἀχαιῶν χαῖρε τῶν ἀπὸ στρατοῦ.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

χαίρω· τὸ τεθνάναι δ' οὐκέτ' ἀντερῶ θεοῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔρως πατρῷας τῆσδε γῆς σ' ἐγύμνασεν;

ΚΗΡΥΞ

ὥστ' ἐνδακρύειν γ' ὄμμασιν χαρᾶς ὕπο.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τερπνῆς ἄρ' ἦστε τῆσδ' ἐπήβολοι νόσου.

539 *τὸ τεθνάναι* Schneidewin, *δ' οὐκέτ' z*: *τεθνᾶναι δ' οὐκ f*.
542 *ἦστε* H. L. Ahrens: *ἴστε f*: *ἦτε z*.

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114 Probably the first term (*ἁρπαγή*, strictly "seizure", but capable of being applied to a consensual elopement; cf. especially Herodotus 1.4.2) refers to the taking of Helen and the second to the property which, according to many passages in the *Iliad* (e.g. 3.69–72), Paris and Helen took with them from Menelaus' house.

Such is the yoke that has been cast upon Troy by the son of Atreus, our senior king, who has come home a happy man! He deserves to be honoured above all other mortals now alive: neither Paris, nor the city that has paid its due together with him, can boast that what they did was greater than what they have suffered. Having been found guilty of abduction and theft,[114] he has both lost his booty and caused his father's house to be mown down to the very ground in utter destruction: the family of Priam have paid double[115] for their crime.

CHORUS

All happiness to you, herald of the Achaeans returning from the war.

HERALD

I *am* happy; if the gods decree my death, I will no longer complain.

CHORUS

Were you prostrated by longing for this land of your fathers?

HERALD

So much so that my eyes now fill with tears of joy.

CHORUS

It is pleasant that you were suffering from that ailment.[116]

115 As a convicted Athenian thief had to (Demosthenes 24.114)—though in this case "double" seems very much an understatement.

116 lit. "pleasant, then, <is> this ailment <that> you [plural, hence referring to the whole army] were possessed of".

ΚΗΡΥΞ

πῶς δή; διδαχθεὶς τοῦδε δεσπόσω λόγου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τῶν ἀντερώντων ἱμέρῳ πεπληγμένοι.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

πολεῖν πολοῦντα τήνδε γῆν στρατὸν λέγεις;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὡς πόλλ' ἀμαυρᾶς ἐκ φρενός μ' ἀναστένειν.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

πόθεν τὸ δύσφρον τοῦτ' ἐπῆν στύγος λεῴ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πάλαι τὸ σιγᾶν φάρμακον βλάβης ἔχω.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

καὶ πῶς; ἀπόντων κοιράνων ἔτρεις τίνας;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὡς νῦν, τὸ σὸν δή, καὶ θανεῖν πολλὴ χάρις.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

εὖ γὰρ πέπρακται. ταῦτα δ' ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ

544 πεπληγμένοι Tyrwhitt: πεπληγμένος *f.*
546 μ' Scaliger: om. *f.*
547 λεῴ Heimsoeth: στρατῷ *f.*
549 κοιράνων *z*: τυράννων *f.* 550 ὡς Auratus: ὧν *f.*

117 In view of 456–460 above, this will almost certainly be taken by the audience to mean that the Elders *still* fear that a disaster impends; but the Herald assumes that whatever they may

HERALD

In what way? If you explain, I shall master your meaning.

CHORUS

You were stricken by longing for those who longed for you in return.

HERALD

You mean that this land yearned for the army which was yearning for it?

CHORUS

So much so that I often groaned aloud in the gloominess of my heart.

HERALD

From what source did this miserable bitterness come over the people?

CHORUS

I have long used silence to protect me against harm.

HERALD

Why, may I ask? Were you afraid of someone, in the rulers' absence?

CHORUS

So that now, as you put it, even death would be a great favour.[117]

HERALD

Yes, for we have been successful! In these affairs, over a

have feared "in the rulers' absence", the return of Agamemnon has banished these fears, and that 550 means in effect "We were so afraid that now, released from our fear, we are as relieved and delighted as you are".

τὰ μέν τις ἂν λέξειεν εὐπετῶς ἔχειν,
τὰ δ' αὖτε κἀπίμομφα· τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν
ἅπαντ' ἀπήμων τὸν δι' αἰῶνος χρόνον;
μόχθους γὰρ εἰ λέγοιμι καὶ δυσαυλίας,
< >
σπαρνὰς παρήξεις καὶ κακοστρώτους, τί δ' οὐ
στένοντες, οὐ λαχόντες ἥματος μέρος;
τὰ δ' αὖτε χέρσῳ καὶ πλέον προσῆν στύγος·
εὐναὶ γὰρ ἦσαν δαΐων πρὸς τείχεσιν,
ἐξ οὐρανοῦ δὲ κἀπὸ γῆς λειμώνιαι
δρόσοι κατεψάκαζον, ἔμπεδον σίνος,
ἐσθημάτων τιθέντες ἔνθηρον τρίχα.
χειμῶνα δ' εἰ λέγοι τις οἰωνοκτόνον,
οἷον παρεῖχ' ἄφερτον Ἰδαία χιών,
ἢ θάλπος, εὖτε πόντος ἐν μεσημβριναῖς
κοίταις ἀκύμων νήνεμος εὕδοι πεσών—
τί ταῦτα πενθεῖν δεῖ; παροίχεται πόνος·
παροίχεται δέ, τοῖσι μὲν τεθνηκόσιν
τὸ μήποτ' αὖθις μηδ' ἀναστῆναι μέλειν,
ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖσιν Ἀργείων στρατοῦ

552 ἂν Auratus: εὖ *f*.
555/6 lacuna posited by Heyse: <Αἰγαῖον ἐκπερῶντες αἷς ἐκάμνομεν> e.g. Wilamowitz.
557 κακοστρώτους *z*: κακοτρώτους *f*.
558 πλέον προσῆν Sonny: προσῆν πλέον *f*.
573–4 transposed by Elberling to precede 570.

long period, there are some things that one can say fall out well, and on the other hand some that do have drawbacks. Who, except the gods, is free from pain for the whole of his lifetime? Now if I were to mention the toils and the wretched lodging ‹we had at sea›,[118] that wretched bedding on narrow walkways—and what did we not groan about, what did we not get as our daily lot? But then again, on dry land, things were even more intensely loathsome. We had bivouacs near the enemy's city walls, and there was always water dripping on to us—both from the sky and meadow-dew from the ground[119]—a persistent plague, filling the wool of our clothes with vermin.[120] And if one were to mention the unendurable cold of winter that killed the birds, which the snows of Ida supplied to us,[121] or the sultry heat when the sea used to fall asleep in a waveless, windless noonday siesta—but why should one mourn over these things? The suffering is past! For the dead, it is so thoroughly past that they don't even have to worry about reveille any more; and for us, the survivors of the Argive

118 A line giving approximately this sense (though probably with a little more elaboration) appears to have dropped out; 556 certainly describes shipboard conditions, in contrast with conditions "on dry land" to which the Herald passes at 558.

119 lit. "dews from the sky, and meadowy ones from the ground, drizzled over us".

120 lit. "wild creatures"; primarily, no doubt, lice (the proper word for which, φθεῖρες, is never found in tragedy).

121 Since the army was not encamped on Mount Ida, the reference will be to cold winds sweeping down from the snow-covered mountain.

νικᾷ τὸ κέρδος, πῆμα δ' οὐκ ἀντιρρέπει·
τί τοὺς ἀναλωθέντας ἐν ψήφῳ λέγειν,
τὸν ζῶντα δ' ἀλγεῖν χρὴ τύχης παλιγκότου;
καὶ πολλὰ χαίρειν συμφοραῖς καταξιῶ,
< >
ὡς κομπάσαι τῳδ' εἰκὸς ἡλίου φάει,
ὑπὲρ θαλάσσης καὶ χθονὸς ποτωμένοις
<
>
"Τροίαν ἑλόντες δή ποτ' Ἀργείων στόλος
θεοῖς λάφυρα ταῦτα τοῖς καθ' Ἑλλάδα
δόμοις ἐπασσάλευσαν ἀρχαῖον γάνος."
τοιαῦτα χρὴ κλυόντας εὐλογεῖν πόλιν
καὶ τοὺς στρατηγούς· καὶ χάρις τιμήσεται
Διὸς τόδ' ἐκπράξασα. πάντ' ἔχεις λόγον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νικώμενος λόγοισιν οὐκ ἀναίνομαι·
αἰεὶ γὰρ ἡβᾷ τοῖς γέρουσιν εὐμαθεῖν.
δόμοις δὲ ταῦτα καὶ Κλυταιμήστρᾳ μέλειν
εἰκὸς μάλιστα, σὺν δὲ πλουτίζειν ἐμέ.

572/5 lacuna posited by West, who suggests e.g. <εἰπεῖν· ἐπαίνοις νῦν ἐνέξεται στρατός>: perh. rather e.g. <πολλοῖς δ' ἐπαίνοις νῦν στράτευμ' ἀρθήσεται> (cf. Euripides *Heracleidae* 321–2).

576/7 lacuna posited by West.

army, the gain prevails and the pain does not counterbalance it—why should we reckon the lost ones into the account, why should the living be expected to grieve over the spite of fortune? Indeed, I think it proper to rejoice greatly at these events, ‹and the expedition will now be extolled with great praise› which—as it is proper to boast to the light of this sun we see—will fly over land and sea. ‹And many generations hence, men will see the memorials of our valour and say,›[122] "Once upon a time an Argive expedition captured Troy, and these are their spoils, given to the gods of Greece, nailed up of old to adorn their temples." Having heard such a tale as I have told, you should praise the city and its generals; and honour will be given to the grace of Zeus which has brought this about. You have heard everything.

CHORUS

I am not sorry to be conquered by your words. In old men, the qualities of a good learner remain ever young. But it is most proper for these things to be the concern of the palace and of Clytaemestra, though also for me to reap their benefits.

The HERALD *is about to enter the palace when* CLYTAEMESTRA *comes out.*

[122] A paraphrase of West's approximate restoration (in his apparatus) of the sense of the lines that appear to be missing here; it is at any rate highly likely that 577–9, which look back on the capture of Troy as an event of the distant past, are neither the army's own boast nor an inscription made at the time when spoils were dedicated, but the comment of a visitor who sees one of the dedications in a sanctuary (for the thought pattern cf. *Iliad* 7.81–91).

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἀνωλόλυξα μὲν πάλαι χαρᾶς ὕπο,
ὅτ' ἦλθ' ὁ πρῶτος νύχιος ἄγγελος πυρὸς
φράζων ἅλωσιν Ἰλίου τ' ἀνάστασιν·
καί τίς μ' ἐνίπτων εἶπε, "φρυκτωρῶν διαὶ
πεισθεῖσα Τροίαν νῦν πεπορθῆσθαι δοκεῖς;
ἦ κάρτα πρὸς γυναικὸς αἴρεσθαι κέαρ."
λόγοις τοιούτοις πλαγκτὸς οὖσ' ἐφαινόμην·
ὅμως δ' ἔθυον, καὶ γυναικείῳ νόμῳ
ὀλολυγμὸν ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν κατὰ πτόλιν
ἔλασκον εὐφημοῦντες, ἐν θεῶν ἕδραις
θυηφάγον κοιμῶντες εὐώδη φλόγα.
καὶ νῦν τὰ μάσσω μὲν τί δεῖ σέ μοι λέγειν;
ἄνακτος αὐτοῦ πάντα πεύσομαι λόγον·
ὅπως δ' ἄριστα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰδοῖον πόσιν
σπεύσω πάλιν μολόντα δέξασθαι. τί γὰρ
γυναικὶ τούτου φέγγος ἥδιον δρακεῖν,
ἀπὸ στρατείας ἄνδρα σώσαντος θεοῦ
πύλας ἀνοῖξαι; ταῦτ' ἀπάγγειλον πόσει,
ἥκειν θ' ὅπως τάχιστ' ἐράσμιον πόλει.
γυναῖκα πιστὴν δ' ἐν δόμοις εὕροι μολὼν
οἵανπερ οὖν ἔλειπε, δωμάτων κύνα
ἐσθλὴν ἐκείνῳ, πολεμίαν τοῖς δύσφροσιν,
καὶ τἄλλ' ὁμοίαν πάντα, σημαντήριον
οὐδὲν διαφθείρασαν ἐν μήκει χρόνου·

587 ἀνωλόλυξα μὲν Stephanus: ἀνωλολύξαμεν *f.*
590 ἐνίπτων *z*: ἐνίππων F. 605 θ' Blaydes: om. *f.*

CLYTAEMESTRA

I raised a cry of triumphant joy long ago, when the first nocturnal fire-messenger came, telling of the capture and destruction of Ilium; and some rebuked me and said, "Have beacon-watchers persuaded you to believe that Troy is now a sacked city? How very like a woman, to let her heart take flight!" By such words they tried to show me up as one deranged; but nevertheless I made sacrifices, and throughout the city one person[123] here, another there, began loudly raising the auspicious cry of triumph according to women's custom, while they lulled the altar-flames in the gods' abodes by feeding them with sweet-smelling incense. And now what need is there for you to tell me about it more fully? I shall hear the whole story from the king himself. I will make haste to give my honourable husband the best possible welcome when he comes home. What light could be sweeter than this for a wife to behold, when she opens the door to a husband whom god has brought safe home from the wars? Report this back to my lord, and tell him to come with all speed, for his city passionately desires him. May he come to find the wife in his palace just as faithful as when he left her, a watchdog of the house, friendly to him and hostile to those who wished him ill, and loyal[124] in all other respects too, having broken no seal[125] in

[123] The Greek word is of masculine gender, implying that at least some of those who followed this "women's custom" were men. [124] lit. "similar", i.e. behaving in other respects in the same (loyal) way as in the respects already mentioned.

[125] Referring to seals placed on storerooms, coffers, etc., where valuable property was kept; but the theatre audience will inevitably think of the seal of chastity (cf. Herodas 1.55) which Clytaemestra *has* broken.

οὐδ' οἶδα τέρψιν οὐδ' ἐπίψογον φάτιν
ἄλλου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς μᾶλλον ἢ χαλκοῦ βαφάς.
τοιόσδ' ὁ κόμπος, τῆς ἀληθείας γέμων,
οὐκ αἰσχρὸς ὡς γυναικὶ γενναίᾳ λακεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

615 αὕτη μὲν οὕτως εἶπε, μανθάνοντί σοι
τοροῖσιν ἑρμηνεῦσιν εὐπρεπῆ λόγον.
σὺ δ' εἰπέ, κῆρυξ, Μενέλεων δὲ πεύθομαι,
εἰ νόστιμός τε καὶ σεσωμένος πάλιν
ἥξει σὺν ὑμῖν, τῆσδε γῆς φίλον κράτος.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

620 οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως λέξαιμι τὰ ψεύδη καλα
εἰς τὸν πολὺν φίλοισι καρποῦσθαι χρόνον.

616 εὐπρεπῆ Auratus: εὐπρεπῶς *f.*
618 τε Paley: γε *f.*

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126 χαλκός, strictly "bronze", can denote any metal used in tools and weapons, as in Pindar, *Pythian* 3.48, where it is called πολιός—the colour of iron (similarly a χαλκεύς would normally be both an iron- and a bronze-worker). Iron was tempered (hardened) by being dipped (βαφή) in cold water (cf. *Odyssey* 9.391–3; Sophocles, *Ajax* 650–1); bronze was not. The audience may reflect (cf. previous note) that Clytaemestra's statement is strictly true: if she knows at least as much about "dipping metal" as she does about "pleasure from another man", it means she knows quite a lot about both—and indeed she soon *will* be "dipping metal" . . . in her husband's blood (cf. *Cho.* 1011).

all this long time; and I know no more of pleasure from another man, or of scandalous rumour, than I do of the tempering of steel.[126] Such is my boast, and, being full of truth, it is not a disgraceful one for a noble woman to utter.[127]

CLYTAEMESTRA goes back inside.

CHORUS

That is what she has said, and if you understand it through clear interpreters it is a . . . plausible speech.[128] But tell me, Herald—I'm asking about Menelaus—has he returned safely, and is he going to come here with you, the dear ruler of this land?

HERALD

There is no way I can tell lies that sound good which will enable my friends to feed on them for any great length of time.[129]

[127] It might be thought unseemly for a woman to make mention of sexual matters in public, even in order to proclaim her purity; but Clytaemestra claims that she can do so without disgrace because (i) she is of noble birth (and so cannot be accused of behaving with casual, ignorant recklessness) and (ii) her assertion is true. Later (1431–47) she will go a great deal further down this road.

[128] Evidently an attempt to hint that Clytaemestra's words should be viewed with some suspicion. The Elders know that her statement that the city "passionately desires" Agamemnon (605) is not true (cf. 445–460); whether they know or suspect anything beyond this is not clear.

[129] i.e. "I *could* tell you some comforting lies, but you'd find out the truth soon anyway."

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς δῆτ' ἂν εἰπὼν κεδνὰ τἀληθῆ τύχοις;
σχισθέντα δ' οὐκ εὔκρυπτα γίγνεται τάδε.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

ἀνὴρ ἄφαντος ἐξ Ἀχαικοῦ στρατοῦ,
αὐτός τε καὶ τὸ πλοῖον· οὐ ψευδῆ λέγω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πότερον ἀναχθεὶς ἐμφανῶς ἐξ Ἰλίου,
ἢ χεῖμα, κοινὸν ἄχθος, ἥρπασε στρατοῦ;

ΚΗΡΥΞ

ἔκυρσας ὥστε τοξότης ἄκρος σκοπού,
μακρὸν δὲ πῆμα συντόμως ἐφημίσω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πότερα γὰρ αὐτοῦ ζῶντος ἢ τεθνηκότος
φάτις πρὸς ἄλλων ναυτίλων ἐκλήζετο;

ΚΗΡΥΞ

οὐκ οἶδεν οὐδεὶς ὥστ' ἀπαγγεῖλαι τορῶς,
πλὴν τοῦ τρέφοντος Ἡλίου χθονὸς φύσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ λέγεις χειμῶνα ναυτικῷ στρατῷ
ἐλθεῖν τελευτῆσαί τε δαιμόνων κότῳ;

622 *τύχοις* Porson: *τύχης f.*

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130 In the *Odyssey* (3.130–179, 276–302) the Greeks sail from Troy in several groups, owing to quarrels; Menelaus sailed earlier than Agamemnon, was caught in a storm when nearly home, and

CHORUS

Ah, if only you could manage to tell *truth* that sounded good! But when these two things are separated, the gap isn't easy to conceal.

HERALD

The man has vanished from the Achaean armada, himself and his ship.[130] I tell you no lie.

CHORUS

Did he put to sea from Ilium in sight of all, or did a storm, afflicting the whole fleet, snatch him away from them?

HERALD

You have hit the mark like a first-class archer, and expressed a great misfortune in a few words.

CHORUS

Then did the talk of the other sailors speak of him as living or as dead?

HERALD

There is no one who knows that so as to inform you definitely, except the Sun who nourishes all that grows on earth.

CHORUS

Well, how did the storm you speak of come upon the naval host through the wrath of the gods,[131] and how did it end?

was carried to Egypt. Aeschylus (like Euripides later in *The Trojan Women*) appears to envisage the whole fleet setting out together. His audience will meet Menelaus in Egypt in the satyr-play *Proteus* at the end of the tetralogy.

[131] Since they can already gather that the storm was a severe one, the Elders at once assume that it *must* have been caused by divine wrath.

ΚΗΡΥΞ

εὔφημον ἦμαρ οὐ πρέπει κακαγγέλῳ
γλώσσῃ μιαίνειν· χωρὶς ἡ τιμὴ θεῶν.
ὅταν δ' ἀπευκτὰ πήματ' ἄγγελος πόλει
σμοιῷ προσώπῳ πτωσίμου στρατοῦ φέρῃ,
πόλει μὲν ἕλκος ἓν τὸ δήμιον τυχεῖν,
πολλοὺς δὲ πολλῶν ἐξαγισθέντας δόμων
ἄνδρας διπλῇ μάστιγι, τὴν Ἄρης φιλεῖ,
δίλογχον ἄτην, φοινίαν ξυνωρίδα—
τοιῶνδε μέντοι πημάτων σεσαγμένον
πρέπει λέγειν παιῶνα τόνδ' Ἐρινύων·
σωτηρίων δὲ πραγμάτων εὐάγγελον
ἥκοντα πρὸς χαίρουσαν εὐεστοῖ πόλιν,
πῶς κεδνὰ τοῖς κακοῖσι συμμείξω, λέγων
χειμῶν' Ἀχαιοῖς οὐκ ἀμήνιτον θεῶν;
ξυνώμοσαν γάρ, ὄντες ἔχθιστοι τὸ πρίν,
πῦρ καὶ θάλασσα, καὶ τὰ πίστ' ἐδειξάτην
φθείροντε τὸν δύστηνον Ἀργείων στρατόν.
ἐν νυκτὶ δυσκύμαντα δ' ὠρώρει κακά·
ναῦς γὰρ πρὸς ἀλλήλαισι Θρῄκιαι πνοαὶ

639 σμοιῷ M. Schmidt, cf. Hesychius σ1270: στυγνῷ *f.*
644 σεσαγμένον Schütz: σεσαγμένων *f.*
649 Ἀχαιοῖς . . . θεῶν Blomfield: Ἀχαιῶν . . . θεοῖς *f.*

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132 i.e. by speaking of such things we would dishonour the gods who have given us victory (so Triclinius).

133 The "sacrifice" is here metaphorical, the reference being to the men in the annihilated army.

134 lit. "a gory pair of chariot-horses"; the duality emphasized

HERALD

It is not proper to defile a day of good omen by the uttering of bad news: the honour due to the gods stands apart from that.[132] When a grim-faced messenger brings a city the painful news of an army lost, news it had prayed not to receive—that the city has suffered one wound collectively, while many men have been taken from many houses as sacrificial victims,[133] by the double whip that Ares loves, in a two-pronged ruin, in gory double harness[134]—well, when someone is loaded down with *that* kind of misery, it is fitting to sing this paean to the Furies.[135] But when one is coming with good tidings of success to a city rejoicing in prosperity—how can I mix together good and evil, by telling of the storm that showed no lack of divine anger against the Achaeans? Two powers who had formerly been fierce enemies, Fire and Sea, made conspiracy together,[136] and gave proof of their covenant by destroying the ill-fated Argive host. In the night there arose a terrible wave of troubles: winds from Thrace,[137] together with lightning,[138]

in this and the two preceding phrases appears to refer to the public and private griefs contrasted in 640–1.

135 This is a "blasphemous paradox" (Fraenkel), since a paean is normally a song of joy. 136 Aeschylus suppresses the traditional cause of the storm, the wrath of Athena whose temple had been violated by the seizure of Cassandra (cf. *Odyssey* 3.135, *Sack of Troy* Arg. 3 West, *Returns* Arg. 1 and 3 West); Athena is never mentioned in the first two plays of the *Oresteia*. The idea of a conspiracy between old enemies to wreck the Achaean fleet is taken up in the prologue of Euripides' *Trojan Women*, where the conspirators are Athena (with her father's thunderbolt) and Poseidon.

137 Cf. on 192.

138 Strictly speaking a πρηστήρ was a waterspout accompanied by lightning (Aristotle, *Meteorologica* 371a15–17).

πρηστῆρι τυφῷ σὺν ζάλῃ τ᾽ ὀμβροκτύπῳ
ἤρεικον· αἱ δὲ κεροτυπούμεναι βίᾳ
ᾤχοντ᾽ ἄφαντοι ποιμένος κακοῦ στρόβῳ.
ἐπεὶ δ᾽ ἀνῆλθε λαμπρὸν ἡλίου φάος,
ὁρῶμεν ἀνθοῦν πέλαγος Αἰγαῖον νεκροῖς
ἀνδρῶν Ἀχαιῶν ναυτικοῖς τ᾽ ἐρειπίοις.
ἡμᾶς γε μὲν δὴ ναῦν τ᾽ ἀκήρατον σκάφος
ἤτοι τις ἐξέκλεψεν ἢ ᾽ξητήσατο
θεός τις, οὐκ ἄνθρωπος, οἷακος θιγών·
Τύχη δὲ σωτὴρ ναῦν θέλουσ᾽ ἐφέζετο,
ὡς μήτ᾽ ἐν ὅρμῳ κύματος ζάλην ἔχειν
μήτ᾽ ἐξοκεῖλαι πρὸς κραταίλεων χθόνα.
ἔπειτα δ᾽ Ἅιδην πόντιον πεφευγότες,
λευκὸν κατ᾽ ἦμαρ, οὐ πεποιθότες τύχῃ,
ἐβουκολοῦμεν φροντίσιν νέον πάθος
στρατοῦ καμόντος καὶ κακῶς σποδουμένου.
καὶ νῦν ἐκείνων τ᾽ εἴ τίς ἐστιν ἐμπνέων,
λέγουσιν ἡμᾶς ὡς ὀλωλότας, τί μήν;
ἡμεῖς τ᾽ ἐκείνους ταὔτ᾽ ἔχειν δοξάζομεν.
γένοιτο δ᾽ ὡς ἄριστα. Μενέλεων γὰρ οὖν
πρῶτόν τε καὶ μάλιστα προσδόκα μέλειν
‹ ›.

656, 655 transposed by Mähly. 656 πρηστῆρι West: χειμῶνι *f.* 655 κεροτυπ- Wasse: κερωτυπ- *f.*
660 ναυτικοῖς τ᾽ ἐρειπίοις Bourdelot: ναυτικῶν τ᾽ ἐρειπίων *f.*
671 τ᾽ Hartung: om. *f.* 672 μήν Linwood: μή *f.*
675/6 lacuna posited (but *before* 675) by Murray; perh. e.g. ‹θεοῖσιν, ὧν δὴ παῖδα κηδεύσας ἔχει›.

whirlwinds, and squalls of driving rain, dashed the ships against each other, and they were savagely gashed[139] and disappeared unseen, whirled about by a perverse shepherd.[140] When the brilliant light of the sun came up, we saw the Aegean Sea carpeted with the bodies of Achaean men and the wreckage of ships. We ourselves, on the other hand, and our ship, its hull unscathed, were either smuggled out or begged off by some god, no man, who took hold of the helm; Fortune in good will took her seat on our ship to save us, so that we didn't have to choose between being swamped by the waves at anchor and being wrecked on the rock-bound shore.[141] Then, having escaped a watery grave, in bright daylight, not believing our luck, we found ourselves pondering in our hearts the disaster that had just happened, with the fleet stricken down and fearfully pounded. And now, if any of *them* is still breathing, they're talking of us as having perished, of course, and *we* suppose the same has happened to them. Well, may the best happen! Menelaus, certainly, you can expect to be the first and main concern ‹of the gods, to whom his marriage has

139 lit. "gored by a horn".

140 Unlike a normal shepherd who ensures his flock move quietly and all together, this shepherd (the storm) makes them mill about in violent confusion.

141 Cf. *Supp.* 766–770 on the dangers of anchoring off a "harbourless coast" at night, even in fair weather.

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675 μέλειν H. L. Ahrens: μολεῖν *f*.

εἰ δ' οὖν τις ἀκτὶς ἡλίου νιν ἱστορεῖ
χλωρόν τε καὶ βλέποντα, μηχαναῖς Διὸς
οὔπω θέλοντος ἐξαναλῶσαι γένος,
ἐλπίς τις αὐτὸν πρὸς δόμους ἥξειν πάλιν.
680 τοσαῦτ' ἀκούσας ἴσθι τἀληθῆ κλυών.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α τίς ποτ' ὠνόμαζεν ὧδ'
ἐς τὸ πᾶν ἐτητύμως—
μή τις ὄντιν' οὐχ ὁρῶ-
685 μέν, προνοίαισι τοῦ πεπρωμένου
γλῶσσαν ἐν τύχᾳ νέμων;—
τὰν δορίγαμβρον ἀμφινει-
κῆ θ' Ἑλέναν; ἐπεὶ πρεπόντως
ἑλέναυς ἔλανδρος ἑλέ-
690 πτολις ἐκ τῶν ἀβροπήνων
προκαλυμμάτων ἔπλευσε
Ζεφύρου γίγαντος αὔρᾳ,

677 χλωρόν τε Toup, cf. Hesychius χ553: καὶ ζῶντα *f.*
681 ὠνόμαζεν *z*: ὠνόμαξεν *f.*
689 ἑλέναυς Blomfield: ἑλέανς *f.*
690 ἀβροπήνων Salmasius: ἀβροτίμων *f.*

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142 Positing a missing line with approximately this sense (Murray, Rose; cf. *Odyssey* 4.569) gives coherence to the passage. The mss.' text would mean "For certainly, first and most, you should expect Menelaus to come"; but it offers no reason for this confident prediction, after a storm in which thousands have perished and which, so far as is known, only one ship got through safely.

made him kin›;[142] and in any case, if some ray of the sun now detects him still in life and vigour, by the contrivance of a Zeus who does not for the present desire to extinguish his line, there is some hope that he will come back home. Having heard this much, be assured that you have heard the truth.

The HERALD *departs in the direction from which he had arrived.*

CHORUS

Who was it that gave a name
so utterly appropriate—
perhaps a being we cannot see,[143]
using language with accuracy
through his foreknowledge of what was fated?—
to the spear-bride for whom two contended,
Helen? For in keeping with that name
she brought hell to ships, to men, to cities[144]
when from her curtains of delicate fabric[145]
she sailed, wafted by the breeze
of giant Zephyrus,[146]

143 i.e. a divine being.

144 In the Greek the pun is on ἑλεῖν which can mean both "capture" and "kill, destroy": Helen caused the destruction of ships, the slaughter of men, and the capture of Troy.

145 This will probably be understood as referring to curtains around the marital bed.

146 The west wind, which took Helen and Paris to Troy in less than three days (*Cypria* fr. 14 West). "Giant" (γίγαντος) may here mean merely "powerful" (cf. *Seven* 424).

πολύανδροί τε φεράσπιδες κυναγοὶ
κατ᾽ ἴχνος πλατᾶν ἄφαντον,
κελσάντων Σιμόεντος ἀκ-
τὰς ἐπ᾽ ἀεξιφύλλους
δι᾽ Ἔριν αἱματόεσσαν.

ἀντ. α Ἰλίῳ δὲ κῆδος ὀρ-
θώνυμον τελεσσίφρων
Μῆνις ἤλασεν, τραπέ-
ζας ἀτίμωσιν ὑστέρῳ χρόνῳ
καὶ ξυνεστίου Διὸς
πρασσομένα τὸ νυμφότι-
μον μέλος ἐκφάτως τίοντας.
†ὑμέναιον ὃς† τότ᾽ ἐπέρ-
ρεπε γαμβροῖσιν ἀείδειν·
μεταμανθάνουσα δ᾽ ὕμνον

697 ἐπ᾽ ἀεξι- Casaubon: ἐπ᾽ ἀξι- *f*: εἰς ἀεξι- *z*.
702 ἀτίμωσιν Canter: ἀτίμωσ ἴν᾽ *f*: ἀτίμως *z*.
707 ὑμέναιον ὃς *f*: τὸ μὲν ἀγλαῶς West: ‹γενέτας, ὅπερ› Willink.

147 i.e. the Achaean army.

148 Helen and Paris.

149 The lesser of Troy's two rivers, the other being the Scamander (511). The Scamander (Menderes) now divides into two branches before reaching the sea, and the Simois (Dümrek) joins the more easterly branch; but in classical times it was believed (Herodotus 2.10; cf. Strabo 13.1.36), notwithstanding *Iliad* 5.774,

as did many men,[147] hunters carrying shields,
following the invisible track of their oar-blades,
after they[148] had landed
on the leafy banks of the Simois[149]—
it was caused by bloody Strife.[150]

And for Ilium there was a wedding morning
true to its name, mourning indeed,[151]
brought to pass by Wrath, exacting
delayed requital for the dishonouring
of the host's table and of Zeus
god of hearth-sharing, against those who loudly
celebrated the bridal song.
At that time she encouraged[152]
the bridegroom's kin to sing it <splendidly>,[153]
but now the city of Priam in its old age

that at the time of the Trojan War much of the lower plain had been under water, so that the Simois would have reached the sea separately. See J. M. Cook in L. Foxhall and J. K. Davies ed. *The Trojan War* (Liverpool, 1984) 163–7.

150 Because Strife (Eris) by her nature delights in conflict, but also with reference to her provocation of the quarrel between Athena, Hera and Aphrodite that led to the Judgement of Paris and hence to his abduction of Helen (cf. *Cypria* Arg. 1 West).

151 In the Greek the play is on two senses of κῆδος, "marriage-bond" (between two families) and "mourning".

152 lit. "inclined the scale for".

153 I translate West's tentative conjecture; the transmitted reading involves a pointless redundancy (ὑμέναιον says nothing that was not already said by τὸ νυμφότιμον μέλος) and a metrical anomaly.

Πριάμου πόλις γεραιὰ
πολύθρηνον μέγα που στένει, κικλῄσκουσα Πάριν τὸν αἰνόλεκτρον,
παμπορθῆ †πολύθρηνον αἰ-
ῶν' ἀμφὶ πολίταν†
μέλεον αἶμ' ἀνατλᾶσα.

στρ. β ἔθρεψεν δὲ λέοντος ἶ-
νιν δόμοις ἀγάλακτον οὗ-
τως ἀνὴρ φιλόμαστον,
ἐν βιότου προτελείοις
ἄμερον, εὐφιλόπαιδα,
καὶ γεραροῖς ἐπίχαρτον·
πολέα δ' ἔσκ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις
νεοτρόφου τέκνου δίκαν,
φαιδρωπὸς ποτὶ χεῖρα σαίνων τε γαστρὸς ἀνάγκαις.

ἀντ. β χρονισθεὶς δ' ἀπέδειξεν ἦ-
θος τὸ πρὸς τοκέων· χάριν
γὰρ τροφεῦσιν ἀμείβων
μηλοφόνοισι σὺν ἄταις
δαῖτ' ἀκέλευστος ἔτευξεν·

714 παμπορθῆ Seidler: παμπρόσθη *f*.
714–5 so *f*: πολύδακρυν Schütz, αἰῶ (Emperius) θεμένα πολιτᾶν (Scaliger) West.
717–8 λέοντος ἶνιν Conington: λέοντα σίνιν *f*.
723 ἔσκ' Casaubon: ἔσχ' *f*.

is learning the song anew
as a bitter lament; surely it groans deeply, calling
Paris "the man who made the evil marriage",
having made the life of its citizens
a life of total devastation, full of tears,[154]
having endured grievous bloodshed.

Just so a man once
reared in his home an infant lion,
fond of the nipple but deprived of its milk,
in its undeveloped time of life
tame, well loved by children
and a delight to the old:
it was much in his arms
like a young suckling baby,
gazing bright-eyed at his hand[155]
and fawning when hunger pressed it.

But in time it displayed the character
inherited from its parents; it returned
thanks to its nurturers
by making, with destructive slaughter of sheep,
a feast, unbidden.

[154] I translate the text as restored by West, incorporating the emendations mentioned in the textual note.

[155] "Which fed or might feed it" (Rose).

727–8 *ἦθος* Conington: *ἔθος f.*
729 *τροφεῦσιν z*: *τροφᾶς f.*
730 *μηλοφόνοισι σὺν* Fix: *μηλοφόνοισιν f.*

αἵματι δ' οἶκος ἐφύρθη,
ἄμαχον ἄλγος οἰκέταις,
μέγα σίνος πολυκτόνον·
ἐκ θεοῦ δ' ἱερεύς τις Ἄ-
τας δόμοιος προσεθρέφθη.

στρ. γ πάραυτα δ' ἐλθεῖν ἐς Ἰλίου πόλιν
λέγοιμ' ἂν φρόνημα μὲν
νηνέμου γαλάνας,
ἀκασκαῖον δ' ἄγαλμα πλούτου,
μαλθακὸν ὀμμάτων βέλος,
δηξίθυμον ἔρωτος ἄνθος.
παρακλίνασ' ἐπέκρανεν
δὲ γάμου πικρὰς τελευτάς,
δύσεδρος καὶ δυσόμιλος
συμένα Πριαμίδιαισιν
πομπᾷ Διὸς ξενίου
νυμφόκλαυτος Ἐρινύς.

ἀντ. γ παλαίφατος δ' ἐν βροτοῖς γέρων λόγος
τέτυκται, μέγαν τελεσ-
θέντα φωτὸς ὄλβον
τεκνοῦσθαι μηδ' ἄπαιδα θνᾴσκειν,

733 ἄμαχον *z*: ἄμαχον δ' *f*. 736 προσεθρέφθη Porson (προσετρέφθη Heath): προσετράφη *f*.
741 δ' Schütz: om. *f*.

The house was steeped in blood,
an uncontrollable grief to the household,
a great calamity with much killing.[156]
What a god had caused to be reared as an inmate of the house
was a priest[157] of Ruin.

And at first I would say that what came
to Ilium's city was a spirit
of windless calm,
a gentle adornment of wealth,
a soft glance darted from the eyes,
a flower of love to pierce the soul.
But she swerved aside and brought about
a bitter end to the marriage,
having come to the family of Priam
as an evil settler, an evil companion,
sent by Zeus god of hospitality,
a Fury who made brides weep.[158]

There is a hoary saying, long spoken among mankind,
that a man's prosperity,
ripened and grown great,

156 These expressions are somewhat excessive if the only loss of life has been among sheep, and it is more likely that we are to understand that together with (*σὺν*) the slaughter of animals, the lion's "unbidden feast" also included human flesh.

157 i.e. sacrificer, slaughterer.

158 The weeping brides are both Trojan (cf. 326–7) and Greek (cf. 429–431); the oxymoronic compound *νυμφόκλαυτος* also reminds us how Helen's own bridal song became a lament (699–716).

ἐκ δ' ἀγαθᾶς τύχας γένει
βλαστάνειν ἀκόρεστον οἰζύν.
δίχα δ' ἄλλων μονόφρων εἰ-
μι· τὸ δυσσεβὲς γὰρ ἔργον
μετὰ μὲν πλείονα τίκτει,
σφετέρᾳ δ' εἰκότα γέννᾳ·
οἴκων γὰρ εὐθυδίκων
καλλίπαις πότμος αἰεί.

στρ. δ φιλεῖ δὲ τίκτειν ὕβρις
μὲν παλαιὰ νεά-
ζουσαν ἐν κακοῖς βροτῶν
ὕβριν τότ' ἢ τόθ', ὅτε τὸ κύ-
ριον μόλῃ φάος τόκου,
δαίμονά τε τὰν ἄμαχον ἀπόλεμον,
ἀνίερον θράσος μέλαι-
νας μελάθροισιν Ἄτας,
εἰδομέναν τοκεῦσιν.

ἀντ. δ Δίκα δὲ λάμπει μὲν ἐν
δυσκάπνοις δώμασιν,
τὸν δ' ἐναίσιμον τίει·

758 *τὸ δυσσεβὲς γὰρ* Pauw: *τὸ γὰρ δυσσεβὲς f.*
766 *ὅτε* Klausen: *ὅταν f.*
767 *φάος τόκου* H. L. Ahrens: *νεαρὰ φάους κότον f.*
768 *τὰν* Blomfield: *τὸν f.*
775 *τίει* H. L. Ahrens: *τίει βίον f.*

has offspring and does not die childless,
that from his good fortune there springs
insatiable woe for his family.
But I differ from others, and have a belief of my own:[159]
it is the impious deed
that breeds more to follow,
resembling their progenitors;
for a house that keeps the straight path of justice
breeds a fortune that is always fair.

An old act of outrage is wont
to give birth to a new young outrage,
which flourishes amid men's suffering,[160]
at this time or at that, when there comes
the proper day for its birth,
and to the deity with whom none can war or fight,
the unholy arrogance
of Ruin, black for the house,
in the likeness of her parents.

But Justice shines out
in smoky hovels,
and honours the righteous man:

159 There is nothing new about the belief now to be stated; it appears several times in the poems of Solon (frr. 4.7–9, 6.3–4, 13.7–16 West). However, the belief that the gods are amorally jealous of human prosperity as such remained widespread, and a generation after Aeschylus it is prominent in Herodotus (e.g. 1.32.1, 3.40, 7.10ε).

160 Alternatively, "to give birth, among evil men, to a new, youthful outrage".

τὰ χρυσόπαστα δ' ἕδεθλα σὺν
πίνῳ χερῶν παλιντρόποις
ὄμμασι λιποῦσ' ὅσια †προσέβα
τοῦ† δύναμιν οὐ σέβουσα πλού-
του παράσημον αἴνῳ·
πᾶν δ' ἐπὶ τέρμα νωμᾷ.

ἄγε δή, βασιλεῦ, Τροίας πτολίπορθ',
Ἀτρέως γένεθλον,
πῶς σε προσείπω, πῶς σε σεβίξω,
μήθ' ὑπεράρας μήθ' ὑποκάμψας
καιρὸν χάριτος;
πολλοὶ δὲ βροτῶν τὸ δοκεῖν εἶναι
προτίουσι δίκην παραβάντες·
τῷ δυσπραγοῦντί τ' ἐπιστενάχειν
πᾶς τις ἕτοιμος, δῆγμα δὲ λύπης
οὐδὲν ἐφ' ἥπαρ προσικνεῖται,
καὶ ξυγχαίρουσιν ὁμοιοπρεπεῖς
ἀγέλαστα πρόσωπα βιαζόμενοι
< >

776 ἕδεθλα Auratus: ἐσθλὰ *f*.
779–780 *προσέβα τοῦ f*: *προσέβατο* Verrall: *προσέμολε* Thiersch. 790 *τ'* Hermann: *δ' f t*.
794/5 lacuna posited by Blomfield.

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161 lit. "bending" (downwards), like the trajectory of an arrow destined to fall short of its mark. 162 From here to 809 the Elders are warning Agamemnon against disaffected citizens of Argos who may pretend to welcome him warmly but are really his

gold-spangled abodes
where hands are not clean
she quits with eyes
averted, and goes to pious ones,
not revering with praise
the might of wealth if it is counterfeit.
She directs all things to their end.

Enter AGAMEMNON *and* CASSANDRA *in a carriage, accompanied by attendants.*

Come now, my king, sacker of Troy,
offspring of Atreus,
how shall I address you, how shall I do you reverence,
neither overshooting nor falling[161] short
of the target of pleasure?
Many men who have transgressed justice
honour semblance above reality:[162]
everyone is ready to groan together
with one who has suffered misfortune, though no pang
of grief
actually penetrates the groaner's heart,[163]
and likewise they put on an appearance of sharing joy,
forcing their unsmiling faces into a grin,
‹to welcome one who has gained success›.[164]

enemies (cf. 830ff); they have previously indicated (445–460) that there is widespread public hostility against the Atreidae. It is unlikely that they have any suspicion of Clytaemestra; otherwise, while they might still not have believed Cassandra's prophecies about her, they would surely at least have understood them.

163 lit. "liver", cf. 432.

164 This must be approximately the sense of the missing line.

795 ὅστις δ' ἀγαθὸς προβατογνώμων,
οὐκ ἔστι λαθεῖν ὄμματα φωτὸς
τὰ δοκοῦντ' εὔφρονος ἐκ διανοίας
ὑδαρεῖ σαίνειν φιλότητι.
σὺ δ' ἐμοὶ τότε μὲν στέλλων στρατιὰν
800 Ἑλένης ἕνεκ', οὐ γάρ σ' ἐπικεύσω,
κάρτ' ἀπομούσως ἦσθα γεγραμμένος
οὐδ' εὖ παπίδων οἴακα νέμων,
<– ∪ γυναικὸς> θάρσος ἑκούσιον
ἀνδράσι θνῄσκουσι κομίζων·
805 νῦν δ' οὐκ ἀπ' ἄκρας φρενὸς οὐδ' ἀφίλως
εὔφρων πόνον εὖ τελέσασιν <ἐγώ>.
γνώσῃ δὲ χρόνῳ διαπευθόμενος
τόν τε δικαίως καὶ τὸν ἀκαίρως
πόλιν οἰκουροῦντα πολιτῶν.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

810 πρῶτον μὲν Ἄργος καὶ θεοὺς ἐγχωρίους
δίκη προσειπεῖν, τοὺς ἐμοὶ μεταιτίους

799 δ' ἐμοὶ West: δέ μοι *f*.
800 σ' Musgrave: om. *f*.
803 lacuna posited by Weil: <αἰπὺ γυναικὸς> e.g. West.
803 θάρσος ἑκούσιον *z*: θράσος ἑκούσιον *f*: θράσος ἐκ θυσιῶν H. L. Ahrens. 806 πόνον Bourdelot: πόνος *f*.
806 <ἐγώ> Wilamowitz: om. *f*.

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165 This appears to be the intended sense; the Greek literally means "a man's eyes which give the appearance from a loyal dispo-

But whoever is a good judge of his flock
will certainly not be fooled by a man's eyes
whose gaze, pretending to come from a loyal disposition,
is fawning on him with watery affection.[165]
To me, at that time, when you were leading forth an
expedition
on account of Helen—I will not conceal this from you—
you seemed painted in very ugly colours[166]
and like one whose mind was steering a bad course,[167]
trying to win back a willingly wanton ‹woman›[168]
by taking men to their deaths;
but now, from the depths of my heart and with affection,
I am friendly to those who have made a good end of
their labours.
In time you will know by inquiry
which of the citizens has acted honestly
when staying at home in the city, and which
inappropriately.

AGAMEMNON

First of all it is right for me to address Argos and its native gods, who are responsible, together with myself, for my re-

sition of fawning with watery affection", an illogical expression which may be the result of blending two possible ways of formulating the thought.

166 lit. "very inartistically".

167 lit. "one who did not manage well the tiller of his mind".

168 lit. "the willing wantonness of a woman". The restoration of γυναικὸς is essential, since θάρσος ἑκούσιον on its own would not be intelligible; metre then requires us to suppose that another word or two have been lost, but they can have contributed little to the sense.

νόστου δικαίων θ' ὧν ἐπραξάμην πόλιν
Πριάμου· δίκας γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γλώσσης θεοὶ
κλυόντες, ἀνδροθνῆτας, Ἰλίου φθορᾶς
εἰς αἱματηρὸν τεῦχος οὐ διχορρόπως
ψήφους ἔθεντο· τῷ δ' ἐναντίῳ κύτει
ἐλπὶς προσῄει χειρὸς οὐ πληρουμένῳ.
καπνῷ δ' ἁλοῦσα νῦν ἔτ' εὔσημος πόλις·
Ἄτης θύελλαι ζῶσι, δυσθνῄσκουσα δὲ
σποδὸς προπέμπει πίονας πλούτου πνοάς.
τούτων θεοῖσι χρὴ πολύμνηστον χάριν
τίνειν, ἐπείπερ ἁρπαγὰς ὑπερκόπους
ἐπραξάμεσθα καὶ γυναικὸς οὕνεκα
πόλιν διημάθυνεν Ἀργεῖον δάκος,
ἵππου νεοσσός, ἀσπιδηφόρος λεώς,
πήδημ' ὀρούσας ἀμφὶ Πλειάδων δύσιν·
ὑπερθορὼν δὲ πύργον ὠμηστὴς λέων
ἄδην ἔλειξεν αἵματος τυραννικοῦ.

819 δυσθνῄσκουσα Enger: *συνθνῄσκουσα f.*
822 ἁρπαγὰς van Herwerden (χἁρπαγὰς Tyrwhitt): *καὶ παγὰς f.*
822 ὑπερκόπους Heath: *ὑπερκότους f.*
825 ἀσπιδηφόρος Blomfield: *ἀσπιδηστρόφος f*: *ἀσπιδοστρόφος z.*

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169 The whole Trojan war is imaged as a trial in court (cf. 40–41), with the two sides putting their cases not by making speeches but by fighting and dying.

170 The immediate reference is to the dangerously long leap from the belly of the gigantic Wooden Horse (cf. *Sack of Troy* fr. 1

turn and for the punishment I have exacted from the city of Priam. The gods heard pleas uttered not by men's tongues but through men's deaths,[169] and without division of opinion cast their votes in the urn of blood for the destruction of Troy; to the vessel on the other side only hope approached—no hand filled it. Even now the smoke rising from the city proclaims it fallen; the gusts of ruin are still alive and blowing, and the ashes, reluctant to die down, send forth thick puffs of wealth. For this we must be deeply mindful of the gods' favour and pay them thanks, since we have punished that arrogant abduction, and on account of a woman a city has been ground into dust by the Argive beast, the offspring of the Horse, the shield-bearing host which made its jump[170] about the time of the setting of the Pleiades;[171] a lion, eater of raw flesh, leaped over the walls and licked its fill of royal blood. This lengthy

West) to the ground below, apparently called "the Trojan leap" in Euripides, *Andromache* 1139; see E. K. Borthwick, *JHS* 87 (1967) 18–23. In the next line, however, the leap metamorphoses into the spring of a lion over Troy's walls and on to its prey.

171 In early November, when the Pleiades could first be seen setting before sunrise (the phrase cannot denote a particular time of the night, because neither the Pleiades nor any other group of stars set at a fixed time of the night). This casual reference to the time of year—which moreover contradicts the usual tradition that Troy fell in the month of Thargelion (May/June), a tradition already found in fifth-century sources (Damastes fr. 7 Fowler, Hellanicus fr. 152 Fowler)—is best accounted for by noting that the setting of the Pleiades heralded the stormy season when sailing was dangerous (Hesiod, *Works and Days* 619–629; cf. on 5–7 above), so that by setting sail for home immediately after sacking the city Agamemnon was asking for trouble—which he duly got.

θεοῖς μὲν ἐξέτεινα φροίμιον τόδε·
τὰ δ' ἐς τὸ σὸν φρόνημα, μέμνημαι κλυὼν
καί φημι ταὐτὰ καὶ συνήγορόν μ' ἔχεις.
παύροις γὰρ ἀνδρῶν ἐστι συγγενὲς τόδε,
φίλον τὸν εὐτυχοῦντ' ἄνευ φθόνων σέβειν.
δύσφρων γὰρ ἰὸς καρδίαν προσήμενος
ἄχθος διπλοίζει τῷ πεπαμένῳ νόσον·
τοῖς τ' αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ πήμασιν βαρύνεται
καὶ τὸν θυραῖον ὄλβον εἰσορῶν στένει.
εἰδὼς λέγοιμ' ἄν, εὖ γὰρ ἐξεπίσταμαι
ὁμιλίας κάτοπτρον, εἴδωλον σκιᾶς
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>
δοκοῦντας εἶναι κάρτα πρευμενεῖς ἐμοί·
μόνος δ' Ὀδυσσεύς, ὅσπερ οὐχ ἑκὼν ἔπλει,
ζευχθεὶς ἕτοιμος ἦν ἐμοὶ σειραφόρος,
εἴτ' οὖν θανόντος εἴτε καὶ ζῶντος πέρι
λέγω. τὰ δ' ἄλλα πρὸς πόλιν τε καὶ θεοὺς

835 πεπαμένῳ Porson: πεπαμμένω *f.*
839/840 lacuna posited by Kitto.

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172 Social intercourse is called a "mirror" because a person's social behaviour reveals his true inner nature and feelings as faithfully and unflatteringly as a mirror reveals his true outward appearance.

173 On the need to posit a lacuna here, see H. D. F. Kitto, *Form and Meaning in Drama* (London, 1956) 23 n.2. Agamemnon is evidently thinking primarily of Achilles and Ajax, but his statement

prelude I have addressed to the gods. [*To the* CHORUS] As for your thoughts, I remember well what you told me, I say the same, and you have my full concurrence. Few men have it in their nature to honour a friend who is enjoying good fortune, without being jealous of him. When a man has an affliction, the poison of ill-will sits close to his heart and doubles his burden: he is weighed down by his own sufferings, and he also grieves to see the success of another. I can say with knowledge—for I am very well acquainted with the mirror of social relations[172]—that ‹the loyalty of friends is› a mere shadowy phantom. ‹I know that many of the leaders of my army were really my jealous enemies,› though to all appearance they were very friendly to me.[173] Only Odysseus, the one who sailed against his will,[174] proved himself, once yoked, my willing right-hand man[175]—whether it is a dead or a living man that I am speaking of. As regards other matters concerning the community and the gods, we will hold public assem-

that *only* Odysseus was truly loyal is likely to have been perceived by the audience as grossly unjust to most of his other colleagues.

174 Odysseus feigned madness in order to avoid joining the expedition, but Palamedes contrived a stratagem that proved he was actually sane (*Cypria* Arg. 5 West).

175 lit. "trace-horse". In classical times, a chariot team consisted either of two horses (yoked to the chariot) or of four; in the latter case, the outer horses were controlled by traces, and their power and speed (especially that of the horse on the driver's right) were vital to the team when rounding bends (cf. Sophocles, *Electra* 721–2). In Homer, trace-horses are mentioned only occasionally (*Iliad* 8.81–88, 16.152) and there is never more than one in a team.

κοινοὺς ἀγῶνας θέντες ἐν πανηγύρει
βουλευσόμεσθα. καὶ τὸ μὲν καλῶς ἔχον
ὅπως χρονίζον εὖ μενεῖ βουλευτέον·
ὅτῳ δὲ καὶ δεῖ φαρμάκων παιωνίων,
ἤτοι κέαντες ἢ τεμόντες εὐφρόνως
πειρασόμεσθα πῆμ᾽ ἀποτρέψαι νόσου.
νῦν δ᾽ εἰς μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐφέστιος
ἐλθὼν θεοῖσι πρῶτα δεξιώσομαι,
οἵπερ πρόσω πέμψαντες ἤγαγον πάλιν.
νίκη δ᾽, ἐπείπερ ἕσπετ᾽, ἐμπέδως μένοι.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἄνδρες πολῖται, πρέσβος Ἀργείων τόδε,
οὐκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι τοὺς φιλάνορας τρόπους
λέξαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐν χρόνῳ δ᾽ ἀποφθίνει
τὸ τάρβος ἀνθρώποισιν. οὐκ ἄλλων πάρα
μαθοῦσ᾽ ἐμαυτῆς δύσφορον λέξω βίον
τοσόνδ᾽ ὁσόνπερ οὗτος ἦν ὑπ᾽ Ἰλίῳ.
τὸ μὲν γυναῖκα πρῶτον ἄρσενος δίχα
ἦσθαι δόμοις ἔρημον ἔκπαγλον κακόν,
πολλὰς κλύουσαν κληδόνας παλιγκότους,
καὶ τὸν μὲν ἥκειν, τὸν δ᾽ ἐπεισφέρειν κακοῦ
κάκιον ἄλλο πῆμα, λάσκοντας δόμοις.
καὶ τραυμάτων μὲν εἰ τόσων ἐτύγχανεν
ἀνὴρ ὅδ᾽ ὡς πρὸς οἶκον ὠχετεύετο

850 πῆμ᾽ ἀποτρέψαι νόσου van Heusde (π. ἀποτρέψαι ν. Porson): πήματος τρέψαι νόσον *f.* 851 ἐφέστιος Karsten: ἐφεστίους *f.* 863 κληδόνας Auratus: ἡδονὰς *f.*

blies and discuss them before the whole people together. We must consider how to make what is good stay good for a long time; and for anything that requires healing remedies we shall endeavour to avert the painful effects of the disease, either by cautery or by judicious use of the knife. Now I will enter my palace, come to the hearth of my home, and as my first act greet the gods[176] who sped me on my way and have brought me back. And may victory, since she has followed me thus far, remain with me always!

He is about to descend from his carriage and enter the palace when CLYTAEMESTRA *appears in the doorway; behind her, two women attendants hold between them a folded textile.*

CLYTAEMESTRA

Men of the city, you assembled Argive elders, I will not be ashamed to speak to you of my feelings of love for my husband: with the passing of time, fear dies away in the human mind. What I will say is not second-hand knowledge, but my own wretched life through all the time that this man was away at[177] Ilium. In the first place, it is a terrible trial for a wife to be sitting alone at home without her man, hearing many dire reports, with first one man coming and then another after him capping his bad news with an even worse disaster to proclaim to the house. And if this man met with as many wounds as was said in the reports that were channelled into our house, he's got more holes in him

176 viz. the gods of the hearth and home (he greeted the gods of the city in 810–3).

177 lit. "below", Troy being situated on a hilltop.

φάτις, τέτρηται δικτύου πλείω λέγειν·
εἰ δ' ἦν τεθνηκὼς ὡς ἐπλήθυον λόγοι,
τρισώματος τἄν, Γηρυὼν ὁ δεύτερος,
χθονὸς τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξηύχει λαβεῖν,
ἅπαξ ἑκάστῳ κατθανὼν μορφώματι.
τοιῶνδ' ἕκατι κληδόνων παλιγκότων
πολλὰς ἄνωθεν ἀρτάνας ἐμῆς δέρης
ἔλυσαν ἄλλοι πρὸς βίαν λελημμένης.
ἐκ τῶνδέ τοι παῖς ἐνθάδ' οὐ παραστατεῖ,
ἐμῶν τε καὶ σῶν κύριος πιστωμάτων,
ὡς χρῆν, Ὀρέστης· μηδὲ θαυμάσῃς τόδε.
τρέφει γὰρ αὐτὸν εὐμενὴς δορύξενος,
Στροφίος ὁ Φωκεύς, ἀμφίλεκτα πήματα
ἐμοὶ προφωνῶν, τόν θ' ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ σέθεν
κίνδυνον, εἴ τε δημόθρους ἀναρχία
βουλὴν κακὴν ῥάψειεν, ὥς τε σύγγονον
βροτοῖσι τὸν πεσόντα λακτίσαι πλέον.
τοιάδε μέντοι σκῆψις οὐ δόλον φέρει.

868 *τέτρηται* H. L. Ahrens: *τέτρωται f.*
869 *ἐπλήθυον* Porson: *ἐπλήθυνον f.*
{871} *πολλὴν ἄνωθεν* (cf. 875), *τὴν κάτω γὰρ οὐ λέγω f*: del. Schütz.
872 *λαβεῖν* Paley: *λαβών f.*
878 *πιστωμάτων* Spanheim: *πιστευμάτων f.*
884 *κακὴν ῥάψειεν* Schoemann (*καταρράψειαν* Scaliger): *καταρρίψειεν f.*

to count than a net has; while if he'd been killed as often as the stories claimed, he'd have had to have three bodies—a second Geryon[178]—and could boast that he had donned a threefold cloak of earth, having died once in each of his persons. Because of dire reports like these, many a noose hung from above was untied from my neck by others after I had been seized and held by force.[179] That, you will understand, is why our son is not standing here by my side, the holder of our mutual pledges, as he ought to be—Orestes. Don't be surprised by this. He is being brought up by a friend bound to us by hospitality and alliance, Strophius the Phocian,[180] who plainly pointed out to me two potential disasters—the danger you were in at Troy, and the possibility that the clamorous populace, in the absence of a ruler, might hatch a wicked plot[181]—and said it was part of human nature to kick a man a bit more when he was down. In an explanation such as this there can be no deception.

178 Geryon was a triple-bodied monster. Heracles' tenth labour was to steal his cattle, and (as much early artistic evidence shows) he had to slay each one of Geryon's bodies separately; see T. R. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth* (Baltimore, 1993) 402–3.

179 The rescuers are imagined as finding Clytaemestra just in time to save her; some of them hold her up, despite her resistance (implied by *πρὸς βίαν*), while others cut the rope and then undo the noose.

180 Strophius was a brother-in-law of Agamemnon's (Euripides, *Iphigeneia in Tauris* 917–8; Pausanias 2.29.4); his son Pylades appears in the next play.

181 The twin dangers were (i) that Agamemnon might be killed and (ii) that his mere absence might make possible a popular revolution and the overthrow of the dynasty; in either case the child Orestes would be in mortal peril.

ἔμοιγε μὲν δὴ κλαυμάτων ἐπίσσυτοι
πηγαὶ κατεσβήκασιν, οὐδ' ἔνι σταγών·
ἐν ὀψικοίτοις δ' ὄμμασιν βλάβας ἔχω
τὰς ἀμφὶ σοὶ κλαίουσα λαμπτηρουχίας
ἀτημελήτους αἰέν. ἐν δ' ὀνείρασιν
λεπταῖς ὑπαὶ κώνωπος ἐξηγειρόμην
ῥιπαῖσι θωύσσοντος, ἀμφὶ σοὶ πάθη
ὁρῶσα πλείω τοῦ ξυνεύδοντος χρόνου.
νῦν, ταῦτα πάντα τλᾶσ', ἀπενθήτῳ φρενὶ
λέγοιμ' ἂν ἄνδρα τόνδε τῶν σταθμῶν κύνα,
σωτῆρα ναὸς πρότονον, ὑψηλῆς στέγης
στῦλον ποδήρη, μονογενὲς τέκνον πατρί,
γαῖαν φανεῖσαν ναυτίλοις παρ' ἐλπίδα,
κάλλιστον ἦμαρ εἰσιδεῖν ἐκ χείματος,
ὁδοιπόρῳ διψῶντι πηγαῖον ῥέος.
τοιοῖσδε τοί νιν ἀξιῶ προσφθέγμασιν,
φθόνος δ' ἀπέστω· πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ πρὶν κακὰ

889 βλάβας *z*: κλάβας F. 898 στῦλον (στύλον) *z*: στόλον *f*. 899 γαῖαν Blomfield: καὶ γῆν *f*.
{902} τερπνὸν δὲ ταναγκαῖον ἐκφυγεῖν ἅπαν *f*: del. Blomfield. 903 τοί νιν Schütz: τοίνυν *f*.

182 lit. "the torch-holding places concerning you".

183 This seemingly oxymoronic expression was well explained by W. S. Barrett (ap. Fraenkel iii 630): the buzz is *objectively* "light" and has, in Barrett's words, "no business to wake a healthy sleeper", but once it has awakened the restless Clytaemestra she finds it much too loud for her to have any chance of getting back to sleep.

Well, in my eyes the gushing fountains of tears have dried up, and there is not a drop left; and I have damaged those eyes by lying late awake, weeping for the beacon-sites set up to signal your return[182] which always remained idle. And amid my dreams I kept being awakened by the light buzz of a trumpeting mosquito,[183] having seen more sufferings afflict you than could fit into the time they shared my bed. Now, after enduring all this, with a heart no longer grieving, I shall speak of this man as the watchdog of his homestead, the forestay[184] that saves the ship, the firmly-footed pillar that supports a lofty roof, a father's only son;[185] as land appearing to sailors in despair, as the daylight that is such a fair thing to behold after a storm, as a flowing spring to a thirsty traveller. Such, I say, are the appellations I hold him worthy of—but let us not court jealousy,[186] for we have endured many sufferings already. Now

184 One of two ropes, secured to the prow of a ship, by which the mast was raised and lowered; if they broke in a storm (as in *Odyssey* 12.409–410) the mast would collapse, often with catastrophic results. See J. S. Morrison and R. T. Williams, *Greek Oared Ships 900–322* BC (Cambridge, 1968) 55.

185 Agamemnon is not, of course, an only son; this phrase, like the previous three, metaphorically describes him as one on whom depends the whole safety of the house and/or the city. The following three expressions (899–901) make a slightly different point, describing him as one who *brings* safety after peril.

186 lit. "let (sc. divine) jealousy be absent": if such jealousy were to be aroused by presumptuous speech, the gods might be provoked into inflicting yet further sufferings. Having said this, Clytaemestra immediately sets out to tempt Agamemnon into acting in the way most likely to arouse divine jealousy!

ἠνειχόμεσθα. νῦν δέ μοι, φίλον κάρα,
ἔκβαιν' ἀπήνης τῆσδε, μὴ χαμαὶ τιθεὶς
τὸν σὸν πόδ', ὦναξ, Ἰλίου πορθήτορα.
δμῳαί, τί μέλλεθ', αἷς ἐπέσταλται τέλος
πέδον κελεύθου στορνύναι πετάσμασιν;
εὐθὺς γενέσθω πορφυρόστρωτος πόρος,
εἰς δῶμ' ἄελπτον ὡς ἂν ἡγῆται Δίκη.
τὰ δ' ἄλλα φροντὶς οὐχ ὕπνῳ νικωμένη
θήσει δικαίως σὺν θεοῖς †εἱμαρμένα†.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

Λήδας γένεθλον, δωμάτων ἐμῶν φύλαξ,
ἀπουσίᾳ μὲν εἶπας εἰκότως ἐμῇ·
μακρὰν γὰρ ἐξέτεινας· ἀλλ' ἐναισίμως
αἰνεῖν, παρ' ἄλλων χρὴ τόδ' ἔρχεσθαι γέρας.
καὶ τἄλλα μὴ γυναικὸς ἐν τρόποις ἐμὲ

907 *ὦναξ z*: *ἄναξ f*.
909 *στορνύναι* Elmsley: *στρωννύναι f*.
913 *θεοῖς εἱμαρμένα f*: *θεοῖσιν ἄρμενα* Karsten.

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187 lit. "dear head".

188 The fabric is later spoken of as "clothing" (921, 963); it is evidently fine in texture and richly embroidered (923, 926, 936), and might have served either as a garment of exceptional luxury or as a wall-hanging (the literal meaning of *πετάσματα*, here rendered "fine fabrics"). It should on no account be spoken or thought of as a "carpet": carpets are made to be trodden on, whereas this fabric will be ruined, its beauty and value destroyed, even by the single, brief passage over it of Agamemnon's unshod feet (948–9, cf. 958–963).

then, please, dear heart,[187] step out of this carriage—but do not set your foot on the earth, my lord, the foot that sacked Troy! Servants, why are you waiting, when you have been assigned the duty of spreading fine fabrics[188] over the ground in his path? Let his way forthwith be spread with crimson, so that Justice may lead him into a home he never hoped to see.[189] [*The attendants spread out the fabrics to form a path from the carriage to the palace door.*] Careful thought, not overcome by sleep, will set everything else ‹in order›[190] in accordance with justice, with the gods' help.

AGAMEMNON

Daughter of Leda, guardian of my house, you have made a speech that was like my absence—you stretched it out to a great length; but to be fittingly praised is an honour that ought to come to me from others.[191] For the rest, do not pamper me as if I were a woman; do not fall to the ground

189 Or "that never hoped to see him". For Agamemnon "Justice" will allude to his war of revenge on Paris and Troy; but Clytaemestra is thinking of the revenge *she* is about to take.

190 I translate Karsten's conjecture, which introduces a word not otherwise found in tragedy but at least gives more or less the sense required; the transmitted reading, "fated", goes very badly with the emphasis placed in 912 on careful, wakeful thought.

191 The point is (i) that a man should not be publicly praised by a member of his own family (cf. Pindar fr. 181), since their praise might be thought to stem merely from affection or deference, and perhaps also (ii) that it is unseemly for a woman to make public speeches.

ἄβρυνε, μηδὲ βαρβάρου φωτὸς δίκην
χαμαιπετὲς βόαμα προσχάνῃς ἐμοί,
μηδ' εἵμασι στρώσασ' ἐπίφθονον πόρον
τίθει· θεοῖς τοι τοῖσδε τιμαλφεῖν χρεών,
ἐν ποικίλοις δὲ θνητὸν ὄντα κάλλεσιν
βαίνειν ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐδαμῶς ἄνευ φόβου.
λέγω κατ' ἄνδρα, μὴ θεόν, σέβειν ἐμέ.
χωρὶς ποδοψήστρων τε καὶ τῶν ποικίλων
κληδὼν ἀϋτεῖ· καὶ τὸ μὴ κακῶς φρονεῖν
θεοῦ μέγιστον δῶρον. ὀλβίσαι δὲ χρὴ
βίον τελευτήσαντ' ἐν εὐεστοῖ φίλῃ.
εἰ πάντα δ' ὡς πράσσοιμ' ἄν, εὐθαρσὴς ἐγώ.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν τόδ' εἰπὲ μὴ παρὰ γνώμην ἐμοί.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

γνώμην μὲν ἴσθι μὴ διαφθεροῦντ' ἐμέ.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ηὔξω θεοῖς δείσας ἂν ὧδ' ἔρξειν τάδε;

933 ἔρξειν Headlam: ἔρδειν *f*.

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192 Cf. *Pers.* 150–4, 694–702. There is no need to suppose that Clytaemestra has actually done this, any more than she has uttered "open-mouthed cries"; Agamemnon is giving examples of the kinds of adulation he does not want, as a preliminary to objecting to the particular kind of adulation that Clytaemestra has offered him.

before me[192] and utter open-mouthed cries in the manner of a barbarian; and do not strew my path with clothing and thereby make it invidious. It is gods, you know, who should be honoured with such objects; to my mind, for a mortal to tread on beautiful embroideries cannot be anything but perilous.[193] I tell you to revere me like a man, not a god. It is cryingly obvious that the words "embroidered" and "doormat" don't go well together;[194] and good sense is the greatest of god's gifts. A man should be called fortunate only when he has finished his life in the prosperity that all desire. If I am one who will act consistently on these principles, I have nothing to fear.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Now tell me this, without disguising your opinion—

AGAMEMNON

Be assured that I shall not be false to my opinion.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Might you have vowed to the gods, in a moment of danger, that you would do this thing?[195]

193 lit. "is in no way without fear".

194 lit. "the appellation of 'foot-wipers' and 'embroidered' cries out divergently".

195 In a critical situation it was common to vow that, in return for immediate divine assistance, one would later give up a precious possession by sacrifice, dedication or otherwise (cf. 963–5). Clytaemestra is not suggesting that Agamemnon has actually made any such vow; she is trying to persuade him that there are *some* circumstances in which it would not be improper to act as she is asking him to do.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

εἴπερ τις εἰδώς γ' εὖ τόδ' ἐξεῖπεν τέλος.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

τί δ' ἂν δοκεῖ σοι Πρίαμος, εἰ τάδ' ἤνυσεν;

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ἐν ποικίλοις ἂν κάρτα μοι βῆναι δοκεῖ.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

μή νυν τὸν ἀνθρώπειον αἰδεσθῇς ψόγον.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

φήμη γε μέντοι δημόθρους μέγα σθένει.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ὁ δ' ἀφθόνητος γ' οὐκ ἐπίζηλος πέλει.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

οὔτοι γυναικός ἐστιν ἱμείρειν μάχης.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

τοῖς δ' ὀλβίοις γε καὶ τὸ νικᾶσθαι πρέπει.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ἦ καὶ σὺ νίκην τῆσδε δήριος τίεις;

934 ἐξεῖπεν Auratus: ἐξεῖπον *f*.
935 δοκεῖ Stanley: δοκῇ *f*.
937 αἰδεσθῇς *z*: αἰδεσθεὶς *f*.
942 τῆσδε Auratus: τήνδε *f*.

196 i.e. if an authoritative interpreter of the divine will (such as Calchas) had stated that the gods' favour could be secured only by

AGAMEMNON

Yes, if somebody with proper knowledge had prescribed this ritual.[196]

CLYTAEMESTRA

And what do you think Priam would have done, if he had had a success like this?

AGAMEMNON

I definitely think he would have walked on embroideries.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Then do not feel shame at the criticisms of mortals.

AGAMEMNON

All the same, the buzz of popular talk is something very powerful.

CLYTAEMESTRA

But he who is not *envied* is not *enviable*.

AGAMEMNON

It is unwomanly, you know, to be eager for a fight.[197]

CLYTAEMESTRA

But for the fortunate, even a defeat can be honourable.[198]

AGAMEMNON

Do you really set such store by victory in this dispute?

making the specific promise to *walk* on the fabrics, rather than (say) burning them or dedicating them in a temple.

[197] Agamemnon is seeking to close down the argument by suggesting that Clytaemestra is persisting in it out of mere contrariness.

[198] i.e. a man who has won such great victories will not be disgraced by accepting defeat in this small matter.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

πιθοῦ· κρατεῖς μέντοι παρείς γ' ἑκὼν ἐμοί.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι ταῦθ', ὑπαί τις ἀρβύλας
λύοι τάχος, πρόδουλον ἔμβασιν ποδός·
καὶ τοῖσδέ μ' ἐμβαίνονθ' ἁλουργέσιν †θεῶν†
μή τις πρόσωθεν ὄμματος βάλοι φθόνος.
πολλὴ γὰρ αἰδὼς δωματοφθορεῖν ποσὶν
φθείροντα πλοῦτον ἀργυρωνήτους θ' ὑφάς.
τούτων μὲν οὕτω· τὴν ξένην δὲ πρευμενῶς
τήνδ' εἰσκόμιζε· τὸν κρατοῦντα μαλθακῶς
θεὸς πρόσωθεν εὐμενῶς προσδέρκεται.
ἑκὼν γὰρ οὐδεὶς δουλίῳ χρῆται ζυγῷ·
αὕτη δέ, πολλῶν χρημάτων ἐξαίρετον
ἄνθος, στρατοῦ δώρημ' ἐμοὶ ξυνέσπετο.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἀκούειν σου κατέστραμμαι τάδε,
εἶμ' εἰς δόμων μέλαθρα πορφύρας πατῶν.

943 κρατεῖς . . . παρείς Weil (κράτος . . . παρείς Bothe): κράτος . . . πάρες *f*.

946 θεῶν *f*: πέπλοις Wecklein (taking θεῶν as an annotation to φθόνος).

948 δωματο- Schütz: σωματο- *f*.

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199 Cf. Sophocles, *Ajax* 1353 (also addressed to Agamemnon): "You are still the master, you know, if you let your friends vanquish you."

200 I translate Wecklein's tentative conjecture. The transmitted reading, "these purple-dyed objects of the gods", is open to

CLYTAEMESTRA

Do as I ask! You are still the master, you know, if you yield to me of your own free will.[199]

AGAMEMNON

Well, if that's what you want, let someone quickly take off my shoes, which serve like slaves for my feet to tread on; and as I walk on these purple-dyed ‹robes›,[200] may no jealous eye strike me from afar! For I feel a great sense of impropriety about despoiling this house under my feet, ruining its wealth and the woven work bought with its silver. Well, so much for that. [*His shoes having now been removed, he descends from the carriage, but does not yet step on the fabrics. He gestures towards* CASSANDRA.] This foreign woman—please welcome her kindly. He who exercises power gently is regarded graciously by god from afar. No one wears the yoke of slavery willingly; and this woman has come with me as a gift from the army, the choice flower of its rich booty. Now, since I have been subjugated into obeying you in this, I will go, treading on purple, to the halls of my house.

the objections (i) that there is no other indication that the fabrics are the sacred property of the gods (indeed, 948–9 and 958–962 imply that they belong to the family), (ii) that if the act of treading on the fabrics were to be seen as sacrilegious as well as arrogant, one would have expected Agamemnon to mention this somewhere in 918–930, and (iii) that the adjective ἁλουργής is not used as a noun in the classical period to denote a purple-dyed object but only to denote the colour purple (the word for a purple garment is ἁλουργίς, and Aeschylus could here, if he wished, have written ταῖσδ' . . . ἁλουργίσιν).

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἔστιν θάλασσα—τίς δέ νιν κατασβέσει;—
τρέφουσα πολλῆς πορφύρας ἰσάργυρον
κηκῖδα παγκαίνιστον, εἱμάτων βαφάς·
ἄκος δ' ὑπάρχει τῶνδε σὺν θεοῖς, ἄναξ,
ἔχειν· πένεσθαι δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται δόμος.
πολλῶν πατησμὸν δ' εἱμάτων ἂν ηὐξάμην,
δόμοισι προυνεχθέντος ἐν χρηστηρίοις,
ψυχῆς κόμιστρα τῆσδε μηχανωμένη.
ῥίζης γὰρ οὔσης φυλλὰς ἵκετ' εἰς δόμους,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα Σειρίου κυνός·
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματῖτιν ἑστίαν,
θάλπος μὲν ἐν χειμῶνι σημαίνεις μολών,
ὅταν δὲ τεύχῃ Ζεὺς ἀπ' ὄμφακος πικρᾶς
οἶνον, τότ' ἤδη ψῦχος ἐν δόμοις πέλει
ἀνδρὸς τελείου δῶμ' ἐπιστρωφωμένου.

959 *ἰσάργυρον* Salmasius: *εἰς ἄργυρον f.*
961 *ἄκος* West: *οἶκος f.*
963 δ' *εἱμάτων* Auratus, Canter: *δειμάτων f.*
965 *μηχανωμένη* Scaliger: *μηχανωμένης f.*
970 Ζεὺς Scaliger: *Ζεύς τ' f.*
972 *ἐπιστρωφ-* Victorius: *ἐπιστροφ- z*: *ἐπιστρεφ- f.*

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201 The dye is made from the secretions of one or more of several Mediterranean molluscs, notably *Haustellum* (formerly *Murex*) *brandaris* and *Hexaplex* (formerly *Murex*) *trunculus*.

202 Cf. Theopompus, *FGrH* 115 F 117.

203 Clytaemestra is responding to Agamemnon's concern about "despoiling this house" (948–9): the sea will never run short

CLYTAEMESTRA

[*as* AGAMEMNON *walks slowly over the fabrics towards the palace door*]

There is a sea—who will ever dry it up?—which breeds an ever-renewed ooze of abundant purple,[201] worth its weight in silver,[202] to dye clothing with. So with the gods' help, my lord, we can remedy this loss; our house does not know what poverty is.[203] To contrive a means of bringing this man back alive, I would have vowed to trample *many* garments, if that had been prescribed to our family in an oracle. For while the root remains, foliage comes to a house,[204] spreading shade over it against the dog-star Sirius;[205] and likewise, now you have come to the hearth of our home, your coming signifies warmth in winter, while when Zeus is making wine out of the sour young grapes,[206] even then it is cool in the house, when the man who is its lord is present in his home. [*AGAMEMNON disappears into the palace.* CLYTAEMESTRA *raises her hands to heaven.*]

of purple, and despite its high price the family (god willing) will never run short of resources with which to buy it.

204 Agamemnon—long absent, sometimes despaired of, but alive—is compared to a great tree that may be drastically pruned, struck by lightning, etc., but which, so long as it has not actually been killed, can grow back to its old glory. A similar image appears in the account of Clytaemestra's dream in Sophocles, *Electra* 417–423.

205 The dog-days of late July and August, when Sirius begins to rise before the sun, are the hottest time of the year.

206 i.e. in summer; the time of vintage is at the morning rising of Arcturus (Hesiod, *Works and Days* 609–611) in mid-September.

Ζεῦ Ζεῦ τέλειε, τὰς ἐμὰς εὐχὰς τέλει·
μέλοι δέ τοί σοι τῶνπερ ἂν μέλλῃς τελεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α τίπτε μοι τόδ' ἐμπέδως
δεῖμα προστατήριον
καρδίας τερασκόπου ποτᾶται,
μαντιπολεῖ δ' ἀκέλευστος ἄμισθος ἀοιδά,
οὐδ' ἀποπτύσας δίκαν
δυσκρίτων ὀνειράτων
θάρσος εὐπειθὲς ἴ-
ζει φρενὸς φίλον θρόνον;
χρόνος δ', ἐπεὶ πρυμνησίων ξὺν ἐμβολαῖς
†ψαμμίας ἀκάτα† παρη-
βησεν, εὖθ' ὑπ' Ἴλιον
ὧρτο ναυβάτας στρατός·

ἀντ. α πεύθομαι δ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων
νόστον, αὐτόμαρτυς ὤν·
τὸν δ' ἄνευ λύρας ὅμως ὑμνῳδεῖ
θρῆνον Ἐρινύος αὐτοδίδακτος ἔσωθεν

974 τοί (τοι) σοι vel sim. *z* Σ^{Tr}: σοι τοι Σ^{F}: σοι *f*.
976 δεῖμα *z*: δεῖγμα F.
982 εὐπειθὲς Jacob: εὐπιθὲς *f*.
982–3 ἴζει Scaliger, Casaubon: ἵξει *f*: ἵξει *z*.
984 ξὺν ἐμβολαῖς Casaubon: ξυνεμβόλοις *f*.
985 ψαμμίας ἀκάτα *f*: ψάμμος (Wecklein) ἄμπτα Wilamowitz.
990 ὅμως Scaliger: ὅπως *f*.
991 Ἐρινύος (-νν-) Porson: ἐριννὺς *f*.

Zeus, Zeus, lord of all fulfilment, fulfil my prayers, and whatever you intend to fulfil, take care to do so, I beg you![207] [*She goes inside.* CASSANDRA *remains in the carriage.*]

CHORUS

Why, why does this fear
persistently hover about,
standing guard in front of my prophetic heart?
Whence comes this presaging song, unbidden, unhired?
Why can I not spurn it,[208]
like a dream hard to interpret,[209]
and let optimism persuade me and seat itself
in command of my mind within?[210]
Time has grown old since the mooring-ropes
were shipped and the sand flew up,[211]
when the seaborne army
set out for Ilium;

and I have learned of its return
from my own eyes, witnessed it in person;
yet still within me my soul, self-taught,
sings out the Fury's lyreless[212] lament—

[207] This formulation implies that Clytaemestra is certain that Zeus desires the death of Agamemnon. [208] lit. "spit it away".

[209] A dream, that is, which has two or more possible significations, one of which is sinister.

[210] lit. "sit on the inward throne of my mind".

[211] I translate Wilamowitz's attractive but uncertain restoration of an unintelligible text.

[212] i.e. sorrowful, since lyre music was associated with joyful occasions; cf. *Eum.* 332–3, *Supp.* 681.

θυμός, οὐ τὸ πᾶν ἔχων
ἐλπίδος φίλον θράσος.
σπλάγχνα δ' οὗτοι ματᾴ-
ζει, πρὸς ἐνδίκοις φρεσὶν
τελεσφόροις δίναις κυκλούμενον κέαρ.
εὔχομαι δ' ἐξ ἐμᾶς
ἐλπίδος ψύθη πεσεῖν
εἰς τὸ μὴ τελεσφόρον.

στρ. β μάλα γέ τοι †τᾶς πολλᾶς ὑγιείας
ἀκόρεστον† τέρμα· νόσος
γείτων ὁμότοιχος ἐρείδει·
καὶ πότμος εὐθυπορῶν
ἀνδρὸς ἔπαισεν <∪ –
– ∪ ∪ – ∪> ἄφαντον ἔρμα.
καὶ τὸ μὲν πρὸ χρημάτων
κτησίων ὄκνος βαλὼν

999 ψύθη Stephanus: ψύδη *f*. 1001 γέ z: γάρ *f*.

1001–2 τᾶς πολλᾶς ὑγιείας ἀκόρεστον *f*: perh. e.g. <ταχὺ πέλει> (West) γυμνασίων ∪∪∪ –, cf. 990) ἀκορέστων <ποτὲ> (West).

1002 νόσος West: νόσος γὰρ *f*.

1006–7 lacuna posited here by Porson (elsewhere by Heath and others): ἔπαισεν <ἄφνω δυστυχίας πρὸς> H. L. Ahrens: perh. ἔπαισ' <ἀφνεοῦ δ. πρ.>.

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213 In rough paraphrase: my rational certainty that wrong will not go unpunished, that justice will surely be fulfilled, communicates itself to my emotions and sets them in turmoil.

it is completely devoid
of its natural confident hope.
And my inwards, my heart whirling
in eddies that betoken fulfilment
around a mind that understands justice, do not speak in vain.[213]
I pray that this may be proved false
and fall away from my expectation
into the realm of the unfulfilled.

Be sure that an end will come, and very soon,
to insatiable pursuit of fitness[214]—disease
is a neighbour that presses hard on the party-wall;
and likewise the fortunes of a ‹rich› man,
while steering a straight course, can strike
on the unseen reef ‹of disaster›.[215]
Still, if caution casts forth
part of the goods in his possession

214 The text is corrupt (it differs widely in metre from the mostly sound antistrophe), but the meaning must be approximately as above; the same point is made in the Hippocratic *Aphorisms* (1.3), "In athletes a high state of physical fitness is dangerous if taken to an extreme". Modern medicine agrees: "Excessive exercise, such as is undertaken by [athletes] preparing for the Olympic Games . . . far from improving the ability to overcome infection, reduces this capability . . . [because] the heavy training will have battered their immune system and their white-cell counts will have been reduced" (Dr T. Stuttaford, *Times* 2 [26 May 2005] p.7).

215 Comparison with the antistrophe shows that seven syllables have been lost from the text.

σφενδόνας ἀπ' εὐμέτρου,
οὐκ ἔδυ πρόπας δόμος
πλησμονᾶς γέμων ἄγαν,
οὐδ' ἐπόντισε σκάφος·
πολλά τοι δόσις ἐκ Διὸς ἀμφιλα-
φής τε καὶ ἐξ ἀλόκων ἐπετειᾶν
νῆστιν ὤλεσεν νόσον.

ἀντ. β τὸ δ' ἐπὶ γᾶν πεσὸν ἅπαξ θανάσιμον
πρόπαρ ἀνδρὸς μέλαν αἷμα τίς ἂν
πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαιτ' ἐπαείδων;
οὐδὲ τὸν ὀρθοδαῆ
τῶν φθιμένων ἀνάγειν
Ζεὺς †αὖτ' ἔπαυσ'† ἐπ' ἀβλαβείᾳ.
εἰ δὲ μὴ τεταγμένα
μοῖρα μοῖραν ἐκ θεῶν
εἶργε μὴ πλέον φέρειν,

1012 πλησμονᾶς Schütz: πημονὰς *f*.
1014 Διὸς *z*: λιὸς *f*.
1018 πεσὸν Portus: πεσόνθ' *f*.
1024 αὖτ' ἔπαυσ' *f*: ἀπέπαυσεν Hartung: ἂν ἔπαυσεν Martin: κατένευσεν West. 1024 ἀβλαβείᾳ *z*: αὐλαβεία F.

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216 The ship is envisaged as having run on to the reef because it is too heavily laden, and as being refloated by jettisoning part of its cargo. It represents in metaphor a house that has become excessively rich (cf. 376ff) and is saved from disaster by giving up part of its possessions: the family may for a while be in straitened circumstances, but a few good harvests (1014–6) can set things

from a sling of generous dimensions,[216]
the whole house does not founder
when crammed too full in surfeit,
nor does he wreck the ship:
the gifts of Zeus are surely great, coming abundantly
from furrows teeming year after year
to destroy the plague of hunger.

But once the black blood of death
has fallen on the earth in front of a man,
who by any incantation can summon it back again?
Not even he who knew aright
how to bring men back from the dead[217]
was permitted to do so by Zeus without coming to
harm.[218]
Were it not that one destiny, prescribed
by the gods, prevents another destiny
from getting more than its due,

right. The "sling" is probably nothing more sophisticated than a large piece of sailcloth or the like, in which two men could carry heavy items of cargo, and from which they could throw them overboard with enough horizontal momentum to avoid fouling or damaging the side of the ship.

217 Asclepius (here envisaged as a hero, not a god—as always in Athens before the 420s); when he raised, or attempted to raise, one or more men from the dead (scarcely any two sources agree on the beneficiary's identity), Zeus destroyed him with a thunderbolt. See E. J. and L. Edelstein, *Asclepius* (Baltimore, 1945) i 37–48, ii 39–53.

218 I translate West's emendation, which, though not entirely convincing, gives better sense than other proposed corrections of the unmetrical reading of the manuscripts.

προφθάσασα καρδία
γλῶσσαν ἂν τάδ' ἐξέχει·
νῦν δ' ὑπὸ σκότῳ βρέμει
θυμαλγής τε καὶ οὐδὲν ἐπελπομέ-
να ποτὲ καίριον ἐκτολυπεύσειν
ζωπυρουμένας φρενός.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

εἴσω κομίζου καὶ σύ, Κασσάνδραν λέγω,
ἐπεί σ' ἔθηκε Ζεὺς ἀμηνίτως δόμοις
κοινωνὸν εἶναι χερνίβων, πολλῶν μετὰ
δούλων σταθεῖσαν κτησίου βωμοῦ πέλας.
ἔκβαιν' ἀπήνης τῆσδε, μηδ' ὑπερφρόνει·
καὶ παῖδα γάρ τοί φασιν Ἀλκμήνης ποτὲ
πραθέντα τλῆναι δουλίας μάζης θιγεῖν.
εἰ δ' οὖν ἀνάγκη τῆσδ' ἐπιρρέποι τύχης,
ἀρχαιοπλούτων δεσποτῶν πολλὴ χάρις·
οἳ δ' οὔποτ' ἐλπίσαντες ἥμησαν καλῶς,
ὠμοί τε δούλοις πάντα <

1041 δουλίας μάζης θιγεῖν Keck: δουλείας μάζης βία F: καὶ ζυγῶν θιγεῖν βίᾳ z.

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219 That is to say: if it were not the case that excessive, unjust prosperity ("more than [one's] due"), especially if gained by the unjust, irrevocable taking of life, can be expected to lead to disaster, we would spontaneously pour out in words the feelings of our hearts; but since that *is* the case, there is nothing we can say that will have any effect (or that will not be ill-omened) and we can only bottle our thoughts up.

my heart would be too quick for my tongue
and would be pouring all this out;
but as it is, it mutters in the darkness,
sore in spirit, without hope of ever
achieving anything timely:[219]
my soul is aflame.

CLYTAEMESTRA comes out of the palace and addresses CASSANDRA, who is still seated in the carriage.

CLYTAEMESTRA

You come along inside too—I mean you, Cassandra—since Zeus, far from being angry with you, has enabled you to share the lustral water of this house,[220] standing round the altar of Zeus Ktesios[221] among many other slaves. [*CASSANDRA remains motionless.*] Come down from this carriage, don't be so proud; they say, you know, that even the son of Alcmene[222] was once sold, and brought himself to touch the coarse food[223] of the slave. If it should fall to one's lot to be forced to endure such a fate, one has much reason to be grateful if one has masters who are of ancient wealth. Those who have reaped a rich harvest quite unexpectedly are cruel to their slaves in every way <and in par-

[220] i.e. to take part in its sacrifices.

[221] Zeus in his capacity as protector of household possessions (cf. *Supp.* 445).

[222] Heracles, who was enslaved to the Lydian queen Omphale (see e.g. Sophocles, *Trachinian Maidens* 248–280; [Apollodorus], *Library* 2.6.2–3) as punishment for the murder of Iphitus and/or for attempting to rob the temple at Delphi.

[223] lit. "uncooked barley cake".

> καὶ παρὰ στάθμην
ἔξεις παρ᾽ ἡμῶν οἷάπερ νομίζεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σοί τοι λέγουσα παύεται, σαφῆ λόγον·
ἐντὸς δ᾽ ἁλοῦσα μορσίμων ἀγρευμάτων
πείθοι᾽ ἄν, εἰ πείθοι᾽· ἀπειθοίης δ᾽ ἴσως.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἀλλ᾽ εἴπερ ἐστὶ μὴ χελιδόνος δίκην
ἀγνῶτα φωνὴν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη,
εἴσω φρενῶν λέγουσα πείθω νιν λόγῳ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔπου· τὰ λῷστα τῶν παρεστώτων λέγει·
πείθου λιποῦσα τόνδ᾽ ἀμαξήρη θρόνον.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οὔτοι θυραίαν τῇδέ μοι σχολὴ πάρα
τρίβειν. τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἑστίας μεσομφάλου
ἕστηκεν ἤδη μῆλα πρὸς σφαγὰς πάρος,
ὡς οὔποτ᾽ ἐλπίσασι τήνδ᾽ ἔξειν χάριν·

1045 lacuna (either after or before *πάντα*) posited by West.
1046 ἔξεις Auratus: ἔχεις *f.*
1048 ἁλοῦσα Haupt: ἂν οὖσα *f.*
1055 τῇδέ μοι (τῇδ᾽ ἐμοὶ) Musgrave: τήνδ᾽ ἐμοὶ *f.*
1057 πάρος Musgrave: πύρος *f.*

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224 This gives, so far as it can be inferred, the approximate sense of the lost line or lines.

225 They mean the net cast over Troy (cf. 357–360), whose cap-

ticular . . . . . ; but we will deal fairly with you in all respects›[224] and you will have from us precisely the kind of treatment that custom prescribes. [*CASSANDRA remains motionless.*]

CHORUS [*to CASSANDRA*]

She's just been talking to *you*, you know, and she's spoken very clearly. You've been captured, caught in a deadly net;[225] you should obey her, if you're going to—but perhaps you won't. [*CASSANDRA remains motionless.*]

CLYTAEMESTRA [*to CHORUS*]

Well, unless she has some unintelligible barbarian language, like the swallows do,[226] what I say is getting inside her mind and my words are persuading her. [*She makes as if to go inside. CASSANDRA remains motionless.*]

CHORUS [*to CASSANDRA*]

Follow her. To do as she tells you is the best choice available. Leave your seat in this carriage, and comply with her words. [*CASSANDRA remains motionless.*]

CLYTAEMESTRA [*to CASSANDRA*]

I don't have any more time to waste staying out here. The sheep are already standing, ready for slaughter, in front of the altar in the very centre[227] of the palace, as you might expect for a household that never dared hope to

ture meant the death of almost its entire male population; but we, and Cassandra, know that she has now been brought into another death-trap which will be fatal for *her.*

226 Foreign languages were often compared to the twittering of birds, especially swallows; cf. Aristophanes, *Birds* 199, 1681, *Frogs* 681, Herodotus 2.57.

227 lit. "at the central navel".

σὺ δ' εἴ τι δράσεις τῶνδε, μὴ σχολὴν τίθει.
εἰ δ' ἀξυνήμων οὖσα μὴ δέχῃ λόγον,
σὺ δ' ἀντὶ φωνῆς φράζε καρβάνῳ χερί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἑρμηνέως ἔοικεν ἡ ξένη τοροῦ
δεῖσθαι· τρόπος δὲ θηρὸς ὣς νεαιρέτου.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἦ μαίνεταί γε καὶ κακῶν κλύει φρενῶν,
ἥτις λιποῦσα μὲν πόλιν νεαίρετον
ἥκει, χαλινὸν δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται φέρειν
πρὶν αἱματηρὸν ἐξαφρίζεσθαι μένος.
οὐ μὴν πλέω ῥίψασ' ἀτιμασθήσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐγὼ δ', ἐποικτίρω γάρ, οὐ θυμώσομαι.
ἴθ', ὦ τάλαινα· τόνδ' ἐρημώσασ' ὄχον,
εἴκουσ' ἀνάγκῃ τῇδε, καίνισον ζυγόν.

1071 εἴκουσ' Robortello: ἑκοῦσ' codd.

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228 The pleasure of their master's safe return, which calls for a large and speedy sacrifice of celebration and thanksgiving.

229 lit. "if, being uncomprehending, you are not receiving ‹my› words".

230 Such would be the effect of the harsh application of the sharp Greek bit to a recalcitrant horse; cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 63.5, on the difficulty experienced by the painter Apelles in capturing the effect of the mixture of foam and blood in the mouth of a panting horse just curbed.

have this pleasure.[228] If *you* want to take some part in this, don't hang around. If you don't understand my words and they're not getting through to you,[229] then instead of speaking, express yourself with gestures [*she mimes a gesture or two to make her meaning clearer*] in the way foreigners do. [*CASSANDRA rises to her feet, swaying wildly as if possessed, but makes no move to leave the carriage.*]

CHORUS

The foreign woman seems to be in need of a clear interpreter. She has the manner of a wild beast just trapped.

CLYTAEMESTRA

She's mad, that's all, obeying the promptings of an unsound mind. She's come here from a city just captured, and she doesn't yet know how to bear the bridle, not till she's foamed out her rage in blood.[230] Well, I'm not going to waste more words and be insulted. [*She abruptly turns and goes inside.*]

CHORUS

I pity you, and I'm not going to be angry. Come on, poor girl. Quit this carriage, yield to what you can see is inevitable, and put on your new yoke.

CASSANDRA at last descends from the carriage and walks towards the palace; but on seeing, before the door, the pillar and altar of Apollo Agyieus, she suddenly stops in her tracks.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

στρ. α ὀτοτοτοτοῖ ποποῖ δᾶ·
ὦπολλον ὦπολλον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί ταῦτ᾽ ἀνωτότυξας ἀμφὶ Λοξίου;
οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὥστε θρηνητοῦ τυχεῖν.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀντ. α ὀτοτοτοτοῖ ποποῖ δᾶ·
ὦπολλον ὦπολλον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἦδ᾽ αὖτε δυσφημοῦσα τὸν θεὸν καλεῖ,
οὐδὲν προσήκοντ᾽ ἐν γόοις παραστατεῖν.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

στρ. β ᾿Απολλον, ᾿Απολλον,
ἀγυιᾶτ᾽, ἀπόλλων ἐμός·
ἀπώλεσας γὰρ οὐ μόλις τὸ δεύτερον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χρήσειν ἔοικεν ἀμφὶ τῶν αὑτῆς κακῶν·
μένει τὸ θεῖον δουλίᾳ περ ἐν φρενί.

1084 περ ἐν Schütz: παρ᾽ ἓν M: παρὲν *f*: παρὸν *z*.

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231 Cf. *Seven* 858. 232 This title (here *Agyiates*, more usually *Agyieus*) was applied to Apollo as he was embodied in the conical stone pillar, often accompanied by an altar, which stood in front of many Athenian houses (cf. Aristophanes, *Wasps* 875, *Thesmophoriazusae* 489) and also in front of the theatrical *skēnē*

CASSANDRA

Ototototoi, popoi, dah!
Apollo! Apollo!

CHORUS

Why are you wailing like that about Loxias? He is not the sort to come in contact with one who laments.[231]

CASSANDRA

Ototototoi, popoi, dah!
Apollo! Apollo!

CHORUS

Here she is again, making an ill-omened invocation of a god for whom it is in no way appropriate to be present amid cries of grief.

CASSANDRA

Apollo, Apollo!
God of the Streets,[232] and my destroyer![233]
For you have destroyed me, with no difficulty, a second time!

CHORUS

It seems as though she is going to prophesy about her own sufferings. Divine inspiration can remain even in the mind of a slave.

both in tragedies and in comedies (cf. Euripides, *Phoenician Maidens* 631; Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusae* 748; Menander, *Dyskolos* 659).

233 A play on Apollo's name, associating it with the verb ἀπολλύναι "destroy".

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀντ. β Ἄπολλον, Ἄπολλον,
ἀγυιᾶτ', ἀπόλλων ἐμός·
ἆ, ποῖ ποτ' ἤγαγες με; πρὸς ποίαν στέγην;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς τὴν Ἀτρειδῶν· εἰ σὺ μὴ τοδ' ἐννοεῖς,
ἐγὼ λέγω σοι, καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἐρεῖς ψύθη.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

στρ. γ μισόθεον μὲν οὖν, πολλὰ συνίστορα
αὐτοφόνα κακὰ †κἀρτάναι†,
ἀνδροσφαγεῖον καὶ πεδορραντήριον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔοικεν εὔρις ἡ ξένη κυνὸς δίκην
εἶναι· ματεύει δ' ὧν ἀνευρήσει φόνον.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀντ. γ μαρτυρίοισι γὰρ τοῖσδ' ἐπιπείθομαι·

1091 *κἀρτάναι f*, *καρτάναι* M (cf. Σ^{M} *ἀγχόνῃ*): *κἀρτάνας z*: *καρατόμα* Kayser.
1092 *ἀνδροσφαγεῖον* Dobree (*ἀνδροσφάγιον* Casaubon): *ἀνδρὸς σφαγ. . ον* M: *ἀνδρὸς σφάγιον* M^{s} *f*.
1094 *ἀνευρήσει* anon.: *ἂν εὑρήσῃ* M: *ἐφευρήσει f*.
1095 *τοῖσδ' ἐπιπείθομαι* Abresch: *τοῖσδε πεπείθομαι* codd.

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234 I translate Kayser's conjecture; the transmitted text refers to "nooses", and none of the many unnatural deaths in the Pelopid house that are mentioned in the trilogy has been, or will be, by hanging. The expression "heads severed" (*καρατόμα*) will refer

CASSANDRA

Apollo, Apollo!
God of the Streets, and my destroyer!
Ah, where on earth, what kind of house, have you
brought me to?

CHORUS

To the house of the Atreidae. If you're not aware of this,
I'm telling you now, and you'll have no cause to say it's
false.

CASSANDRA

No, no, a house that hates the gods, one that has
knowledge
of many crimes in which kin have been slain and heads
severed[234]—
a place where men are slaughtered and blood sprinkles
the floor!

CHORUS

The foreign woman seems to be as keen-scented as a
hound; she has got on the right trail to track down some
murders.[235]

CASSANDRA

Here is evidence to convince me:

primarily to the children of Thyestes; cf. Seneca, *Thyestes* 764, and the closely parallel story of Harpagus and Astyages in Herodotus 1.119.4.

235 lit. "she is on the trail of murders of those whom [*or*: of those whose murders] she will find", i.e. murders of kindred, specifically those of the children of Thyestes.

κλαιόμενα τάδε βρέφη σφαγὰς
ὀπτάς τε σάρκας πρὸς πατρὸς βεβρωμένας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν κλέος σου μαντικὸν πεπυσμένοι
ἦμεν· προφήτας δ' οὔτινας μαστεύομεν.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

στρ. δ ἰὼ ποποῖ, τί ποτε μήδεται;
τί τόδε νέον ἄχος; μέγα,
μέγ' ἐν δόμοισι τοῖσδε μήδεται κακόν,
ἄφερτον φίλοισιν, δυσίατον· ἀλκὰ δ'
ἑκὰς ἀποστατεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τούτων ἄιδρίς εἰμι τῶν μαντευμάτων,
ἐκεῖνα δ' ἔγνων· πᾶσα γὰρ πόλις βοᾷ.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀντ. δ ἰὼ τάλαινα, τόδε γὰρ τελεῖς;
τὸν ὁμοδέμνιον πόσιν
λούτροισι φαιδρύνασα—πῶς φράσω τέλος;

1098 καὶ μὴν Paley: ἦμην M: ἦμεν vel sim. M^{sscr} *f.*

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236 It is not clear whether the last line describes a second thing that Cassandra sees (parallel to "babies") or a second thing that the children are bewailing (parallel to "their slaughter"); for the latter possibility cf. 1219–22 where the dead children are said to be holding in their hands the flesh and offals of their own bodies which their father ate.

these are babies I see, bewailing their slaughter,
and the roast flesh their father devoured![236]

CHORUS

Yes, we had indeed heard of your fame as a seer; but we are not looking for any prophets.

CASSANDRA

Ió, popoi! What, what is being schemed?[237]
What is this fresh agony? A great evil,
a great evil is being schemed in this house,
unendurable for the family, hard to heal; and protection stands far away.

CHORUS

I do not know what this prophecy means. The other one I did know: the whole city resounds with it.

CASSANDRA

Ió, wretched woman! Will you really carry out this deed?
You wash your husband, who shares your bed,
in the bath, and—how shall I tell the end?

[237] lit. "what is (she) scheming?"; the Greek text, here and in 1103, leaves the subject unexpressed and is thus able to avoid disclosing the gender of the schemer, and, as Fraenkel recommends, I have used the English passive to reproduce this vagueness. The verb *μήδεται*, used twice in this strophe, may suggest a possible etymology of the name *Κλυται-μήστρα* as "famous schemer".

τάχος γὰρ τόδ' ἔσται· προτείνει δὲ χεὶρ ἐκ
χερὸς ὀρέγματα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὔπω ξυνῆκα· νῦν γὰρ ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων
ἐπαργέμοισι θεσφάτοις δυσμηχανῶ.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

στρ. ε ἒ ἒ παπαῖ παπαῖ, τί τόδε φαίνεται;
ἦ δίκτυόν τί γ' Ἅιδου;
ἀλλ' ἄρκυς ἡ ξύνευνος, ἡ ξυναιτία
φόνου. στάσις δ' ἀκόρετος γένει
κατολολυξάτω θύματος λευσίμου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποίαν Ἐρινὺν τήνδε δώμασιν κέλῃ
ἐπορθιάζειν; οὔ με φαιδρύνει λόγος·
ἐπὶ δὲ καρδίαν ἔδραμε κροκοβαφὴς
σταγών, ἅτε καὶ δορὶ πτωσίμοις
ξυνανύτει βίου
δύντος αὐγαῖς. ταχεῖα δ' ἄτα πέλει.

1111 ὀρέγματα Hermann, cf. Σ^{M}: ὀρεγμένα *f*: ὀρεγόμενα M (-ομένα M^{pc}). 1117 ἀκόρετος Hermann: ἀκόρεστος codd.
1122 δορὶ πτωσίμοις Casaubon: δορία πτώσιμος M: δωρία πτώσιμος *f*.

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238 The audience probably will not be able to interpret this sinister sentence very precisely, but Aeschylus may be imagining that Cassandra's vision at this moment is of Clytaemestra reaching down to pick up the robe which she is about to throw over Agamemnon. 239 For the association between the women's cry of triumph (ὀλολυγμός) and sacrifices, see on 28. Here the

It will come soon. Hand after hand
extends itself at full stretch.[238]

CHORUS

I still don't understand; the riddling words in these obscure oracles leave me quite at a loss.

CASSANDRA

Ah, ah! Papai, papai! What is this I see?
Is it, is it, a net of death?
The net is she who shares the bed, who shares the guilt
of the murder! Let the insatiable spirit of strife raise a
cry of triumph[239]
over the family for this sacrifice that merits stoning![240]

CHORUS

What do you mean by bidding this Fury raise a loud cry over the house? Your words do not cheer me—

[*singing*]

and to my heart there flow saffron-coloured
drops, the same which, when men fall in battle,
arrive there with the last setting rays
of their life.[241] Disaster comes swiftly.

"sacrifice" is metaphorical, and blasphemous. [240] Cf. 1615–6 where the chorus predict that Aegisthus will be stoned by the enraged people for his part in Agamemnon's murder.

[241] i.e. "I am as pale with terror as a mortally wounded warrior." Cf. *Cho.* 183–4 where Electra, "stricken as if transfixed by a weapon", says there is "a surge of bile close to [her] heart". There were thought to be two kinds of bile, yellow and black; the bile set in motion by fear was the yellow variety. The Hippocratic treatise *On Diseases* (2.5) says that "fainting occurs when phlegm or bile comes close to the heart".

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀντ. ε ἆ ἆ ἰδοὺ ἰδού· ἄπεχε τᾶς βοὸς
τὸν ταῦρον· ἐν πέπλοισιν
μελαγκέρῳ λαβοῦσα μηχανήματι
τύπτει· πίτνει δ' ἐν ἐνύδρῳ τεύχει.
δολοφόνου λέβητος τέχναν σοι λέγω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐ κομπάσαιμ' ἂν θεσφάτων γνώμων ἄκρος
εἶναι, κακῷ δέ τῳ προσεικάζω τάδε.
ἀπὸ δὲ θεσφάτων τίς ἀγαθὰ φάτις
βροτοῖς τέλλεται; κακῶν γὰρ διαὶ
πολυεπεῖς τέχναι
θεσπιῳδῶν φόβον φέρουσιν μαθεῖν.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

στρ. ζ ἰὼ ἰὼ ταλαίνας κακόποτμοι τύχαι·
τὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν θροῶ πάθος ἐπεγχύδαν.
ποῖ δή με δεῦρο τὴν τάλαιναν ἤγαγες;
οὐδέν ποτ' εἰ μὴ ξυνθανουμένην· τί γάρ;

1127 *μελαγκέρῳ* M^{pc} *γρ*ΣM: *μελαγκέρων* M^{ac} ΣM *f.*
1128 *ἐν* Schütz: om. codd.
1129 *τέχναν* Weil: *τύχαν* codd.
1133 *τέλλεται* Emperius: *στέλλεται* codd.
1133 *διαὶ* Hermann: *διὰ* M: *δὴ αἱ f.*
1135 *θεσπιῳδῶν* Portus: *θεσπιῳδὸν* codd.
1137 *ἐπεγχύδαν* Headlam: *ἐπεγχέασα* M ^{i}ΣM: *ἐπαγχέασα f.*

CASSANDRA

Oh, oh! See, see! Keep the bull
away from the cow! She traps him
in the robe, the black-horned[242] contrivance,
and strikes—and he falls into the tub full of water.
I am telling you of the device that worked treacherous
murder in a bath.

CHORUS

I would not claim to be a first-class interpreter of prophecies, but this seems to me like something bad.

[*singing*]

But what good word comes to mortals
from prophecies? The wordy arts
of oracle-chanters tell
of evil, and bring tidings fearful to learn.

CASSANDRA

Ió ió, my evil fate, my wretched fortune!
I cry out my own sufferings, pouring them on top of
these.
Why have you[243] brought me here in my misery?
For no reason on earth, if not to die with him—what
else?

242 The robe is neither black (cf. *Cho.* 1013, *Eum.* 635) nor horned; but it is the first implement of attack wielded by the "cow" against the "bull", and on being thrown over Agamemnon it envelops him in darkness (whence he will shortly be dispatched to the darkness of Hades).

243 Probably Apollo (who knows what Cassandra's fate will be) rather than Agamemnon (who does not).

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φρενομανής τις εἶ, θεοφόρητος, ἀμ-
φι δ᾽ αὐτᾶς θροεῖς
νόμον ἄνομον, οἷά τις ξουθὰ
ἀκόρετος βοᾶς, φεῦ, φιλοίκτοις φρεσὶν
Ἴτυν Ἴτυν στένουσ᾽ ἀμφιθαλῆ κακοῖς
ἀηδὼν μόρον.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀντ. ζ ἰὼ ἰὼ λιγείας βίος ἀηδόνος·
περέβαλον γάρ οἱ πτεροφόρον δέμας
θεοὶ γλυκύν τ᾽ αἰῶνα κλαυμάτων ἄτερ·
ἐμοὶ δὲ μίμνει σχισμὸς ἀμφήκει δορί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πόθεν ἐπισσύτους θεοφόρους ἔχεις
ματαίους δύας,
τὰ δ᾽ ἐπίφοβα δυσφάτῳ κλαγγᾷ
μελοτυπεῖς ὁμοῦ τ᾽ ὀρθίοις ἐν νόμοις;

1143 *ἀκόρετος* Ald.: *ἀκόρεστος* codd.
1143 *φιλοίκτοις* Dobree (*φιλοίκτοισι z*): *φιλοικτοις ταλαίναις f*: *ταλαίναισ* M: *ταλαίνασ* M^{s}.
1145 *μόρον* Page: *βίον* codd.
1146 *βίος ἀηδόνος* Page: *ἀηδόνος μόρον* codd.
1147 *περέβαλον* Wieseler: *περεβάλοντο* M: *περιβαλόντες f*.
1149 *αἰῶνα* $\gamma\rho$M: *ἀγῶνα* M *f*.
1150 *ἔχεις* Hermann: *τ᾽ ἔχεις* codd.

244 Because one expects singing to be associated with joy, not sorrow.

CHORUS

You are out of your mind, divinely possessed;
you cry forth about yourself
a song that is no song,[244] like a vibrant-throated[245] bird
wailing insatiably, alas, with a heart fond of grieving,
the nightingale lamenting "Itys, Itys!" for a death
in which both parents did evil.[246]

CASSANDRA

Ió ió, the life of the clear-voiced nightingale!
The gods have clothed her with a feathered form
and given her a pleasant life with no cause to grieve;[247]
while what awaits me is to be cloven by a two-edged
weapon.

CHORUS

Whence do you get this possession coming violently
upon you,
this futile misery,
and sound out these fearful things in song, at once
in tones hard to interpret and in notes loud and shrill?

245 The epithet *ξουθός* is often applied to the nightingale, but its precise meaning is unclear and may well have been unclear in Aeschylus' time too; see M. S. Silk, *CQ* 33 (1983) 317–9, and Dunbar on Aristophanes, *Birds* 214.

246 For the story of the nightingale, see *Suppliants* 60–67, with notes. The adjective *ἀμφιθαλής* denotes properly a child who has both parents living; applied to Itys' death, it is horribly perverted to remind us that one of his parents killed him and the other ate his flesh.

247 She continues to grieve for her *past* sorrows, but there are none in her *present* life.

πόθεν ὅρους ἔχεις θεσπεσίας ὁδοῦ
κακορρήμονας;

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

στρ. η ἰὼ γάμοι γάμοι Πάριδος ὀλέθριοι φίλων·
ἰὼ Σκαμάνδρου πάτριον ποτόν·
τότε μὲν ἀμφὶ σὰς ἀιόνας τάλαιν᾽
ἡνυτόμαν τροφαῖς·
νῦν δ᾽ ἀμφὶ Κωκυτόν τε κἀχερουσίους
ὄχθους ἔοικα θεσπιῳδήσειν τάχα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί τόδε τορὸν ἄγαν ἔπος ἐφημίσω;
νεογνὸς ἂν ἀιὼν μάθοι.
πέπληγμαι δ᾽ †ὑπὸ† δήγματι φοινίῳ
δυσαλγεῖ τύχᾳ μινυρὰ θρεομένας,
θραύματ᾽ ἐμοὶ κλυεῖν.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀντ. η ἰὼ πόνοι πόνοι πόλεος ὀλομένας τὸ πᾶν·
ἰὼ πρόπυργοι θυσίαι πατρὸς
πολυκανεῖς βοτῶν ποιονόμων· ἄκος δ᾽
οὐδὲν ἐπήρκεσαν
τὸ μὴ πόλιν μὲν ὥσπερ οὖν ἐχρῆν παθεῖν·
ἐγὼ δὲ θερμὸν ῥοῦν τάχ᾽ ἐν πέδῳ βαλῶ.

1163 ἂν ἀιὼν Karsten: *ἀνθρώπων f.* 1164 ὑπὸ *f*: ὑπαὶ *z*: ἅπερ Franz. 1165 δυσαλγεῖ Auratus: δυσαγγεῖ *f*.
1165 μινυρὰ Schütz: *μινυρὰ κακὰ f*.
1167 ὀλομένας anon.: ὀλωμένας *f*: ὀλουμένας *z*.
1171 ἐχρῆν Maas: ἔχειν *f*: ἔχει *z*.

Whence do you get the direction[248] of your path of
prophecy,
which speaks of evil?

CASSANDRA

Ió, the wedding, the wedding of Paris, fatal to his kin!
Ió, Scamander, the stream from which my fathers drank!
Once, wretched me, upon your banks
I was nurtured to maturity;
now it seems I shall soon be prophesying
beside Cocytus and the steep banks of Acheron.[249]

CHORUS

Why have you uttered these words that are all too clear?
A babe hearing them could understand.
I am stricken by your painful fate
as if by a bloody bite, as you cry and whimper
in a way that it shatters me to hear.

CASSANDRA

Ió, the sufferings, the sufferings of my city, utterly
destroyed!
Ió, the sacrifices my father offered before the walls,
slaying many grazing beasts! But they furnished
no remedy to prevent
the city from suffering as it was bound to—
and I shall soon shed a flow of warm blood to the
ground.

[248] lit. "the boundary-stones" marking the edges of the "path" along which her song is travelling. [249] Cf. *Seven* 690, 856.

1172 *θερμὸν ῥοῦν* Musgrave, *ἐν πέδῳ* Portus: *θερμόνους ἐμπέδω f.*

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἑπόμενα προτέροισι τάδ' ἐφημίσω,
καί τίς σε κακοφρονῶν τίθη-
σι δαίμων ὑπερβαρὴς ἐμπίτνων
μελίζειν πάθη γοερὰ θανατοφόρα·
τέρμα δ' ἀμηχανῶ.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ὁ χρησμὸς οὐκέτ' ἐκ καλυμμάτων
ἔσται δεδορκὼς νεογάμου νύμφης δίκην,
λαμπρὸς δ' ἔοικεν ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολῆς
πνέων ἐπάξειν, ὥστε κύματος δίκην
κλύζειν πρὸς ἀγὰς τοῦδε πήματος πολὺ
μεῖζον· φρενώσω δ' οὐκέτ' ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων.
καὶ μαρτυρεῖτε συνδρόμως ἴχνος κακῶν
ῥινηλατούσῃ τῶν πάλαι πεπραγμένων.
τὴν γὰρ στέγην τήνδ' οὔποτ' ἐκλείπει χορὸς
ξύμφθογγος, οὐκ εὔφωνος· οὐ γὰρ εὖ λέγει.

1174 *κακοφρονῶν* Schütz: *κακοφρονεῖν f.*
1180 *ἀντολῆς* Lavery: *ἀντολὰς f.*
1181 *ἐπάξειν* West (*ἐσάξειν* Bothe, *ἐφήξειν* Page): *ἐσῆξειν f.*
1182 *κλύζειν* Auratus: *κλύειν f.*
1182 *ἀγὰς* H. L. Ahrens: *αὐγὰς f.*
1187 *-φθογγος z*: *-φογγος f.*

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250 The mss. have "towards the sunrise"; see J. Lavery, *Hermes* 132 (2004) 12–13.

251 The mss. have "against the sun's rays", and editors refer to the beautiful simile of Catullus (64.269–277) describing the sight of morning sunlight shining through waves raised by a west wind;

CHORUS

What you have uttered now follows on from what went
before,
and some divinity that wishes you ill
is assailing you very heavily and causing you
to sing of woeful, deadly sufferings;
I am at a loss how it will end.

CASSANDRA

Well, now my prophecies will no longer be looking through a veil like a newly-wedded bride; rather you may expect that it will sweep down from the sunrise[250] like a bright fresh wind, so that there will break upon the beach,[251] so to speak, a wave of sorrow far greater than this one.[252] No longer will I give you information through riddles. I want you to testify that I am following close on the scent of evils perpetrated in former times. There is a group of singers that never leaves this house. They sing in unison, but not pleasantly, for their words speak of evil. Moreover, this

but here, as the end of the sentence shows, the waves are being thought of not as a thing of beauty but as a potentially harmful force of nature. It was almost inevitable that the rare word *ἀγὰς* (cf. Sophocles fr. 969, Apollonius Rhodius 1.554) would be corrupted into the common *αὐγὰς* when the sun had been mentioned only two lines earlier.

252 This is usually taken to mean that Cassandra's second utterance of her prophecies will pain the Elders more than the first because it will be more clearly understood; but it may instead, or additionally, foreshadow a future, climactic crime which she has not yet mentioned—the matricide of Orestes (1279–84, 1317–26), which she will call "the coping-stone [of] these disasters for the family".

καὶ μὴν πεπωκώς γ', ὡς θρασύνεσθαι πλέον,
βρότειον αἷμα κῶμος ἐν δόμοις μένει,
δύσπεμπτος ἔξω, συγγόνων Ἐρινύων·
ὑμνοῦσι δ' ὕμνον δώμασιν προσήμεναι
πρώταρχον ἄτην, ἐν μέρει δ' ἀπέπτυσαν
εὐνὰς ἀδελφοῦ τῷ πατοῦντι δυσμενεῖς.
ἥμαρτον, ἢ κυρῶ τι τοξότης τις ὥς;
ἢ ψευδόμαντίς εἰμι, θυροκόπος, φλέδων;
ἐκμαρτύρησον προυμόσας τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι
λόγῳ παλαιὰς τῶνδ' ἁμαρτίας δόμων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ἂν ὅρκου πῆγμα γενναίως παγὲν

1192 *πρώταρχον z*: *πρώταρχος f.*
1194 *κυρῶ* Korais: *τηρῶ f.*
1196 *μὴ* anon.: *μ' f.*
1198 *ὅρκου πῆγμα* Auratus: *ὅρκος πῆμα f.*

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253 A *κῶμος* was properly a roving band of revellers which might force its way into a house where a symposium is in progress and demand drink or entertainment; normally, once this was supplied, they would leave to try their luck elsewhere.

254 "Kindred" because they have been called into existence by the murder of members of the family by other members of the family. 255 lit. "they spit out".

256 The bed was the marital bed of Atreus; its defiler was his brother Thyestes.

257 Like the mendicant priests and prophets who "go to the doors of the rich and try to persuade them that they have a power vouchsafed by the gods" to effect, for a small fee, the forgiveness of their sins, the harming of their enemies, etc. (Plato, *Republic*

revel-band[253] drinks human blood, thus emboldening itself, and then remains in the house, hard to send away—the band of the house's kindred Furies.[254] Besetting the chambers of the house, they sing a song of the ruinous folly that first began it all, and one after another they show their abhorrence of[255] the brother's bed that worked harm to him who defiled it.[256] Am I in error, or have I, like an archer, scored a hit? Or am I a lying prophet, a door-knocker,[257] a worthless blabberer? Testify, on your oath, that you have not heard tell of, and do not know about, these old crimes of this house.[258]

CHORUS

And how could the confirmation of an oath, legitimately

364b-c). Cassandra will later say that in Troy she was regarded as just such a person (1273–4).

[258] Cassandra is challenging the Elders to deny on oath, if they can, that they know she is telling the truth about the past events to which she has referred; of course they cannot, and they accordingly decline to take the oath (1198–9). The exchange is designed to recall a procedural device of the Athenian lawcourts. In the fourth century, a person who was called as a witness, but did not want to confirm the statement prepared for him by the litigant who had called him, was required to declare on oath that he did not know the statement to be true (with a fine of 1000 drachmae if he refused); see C. Carey, *CQ* 45 (1995) 114–9. This procedure cannot have existed in quite this form in the fifth century, when witnesses, rather than merely confirming statements drawn up in advance, answered oral questions and could be invited to speak *ad libitum* (cf. Andocides 1.14, 69); but it is likely enough that when a witness refused to confirm a proposition put to him, he could be challenged to swear that he did not know the proposition to be true.

παιώνιον γένοιτο; θαυμάζω δέ σου,
πόντου πέραν τραφεῖσαν ἀλλόθρουν πόλιν
κυρεῖν λέγουσαν, ὥσπερ εἰ παρεστάτεις.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

μάντις μ' Ἀπόλλων τῷδ' ἐπέστησεν τέλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μῶν καὶ θεός περ ἱμέρῳ πεπληγμένος;

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

πρὸ τοῦ μὲν αἰδὼς ἦν ἐμοὶ λέγειν τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἁβρύνεται γὰρ πᾶς τις εὖ πράσσων πλέον.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀλλ' ἦν παλαιστὴς κάρτ' ἐμοὶ πνέων χάριν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἦ καὶ τέκνων εἰς ἔργον ἠλθέτην ὁμοῦ;

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ξυναινέσασα Λοξίαν ἐψευσάμην.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἤδη τέχναισιν ἐνθέοις ἡρημένη;

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἤδη πολίταις πάντ' ἐθέσπιζον πάθη.

1204, 1203 transposed by Musgrave.
1207 ἠλθέτην Elmsley, ὁμοῦ Butler: ἤλθετον νόμῳ *f*.

taken, be a remedy for them? I marvel at you, that having been bred beyond the seas you can talk so accurately about a foreign-speaking city,[259] as if you had been on the spot.

CASSANDRA

The seer Apollo assigned me to this function.

CHORUS

You don't mean that he was struck with desire, god though he was?

CASSANDRA

Till now I was ashamed to say this.

CHORUS

Yes, prosperity makes anyone more coy.

CASSANDRA

But he was a wrestler, really breathing delight upon me.

CHORUS

Did you come together in the act of procreation?

CASSANDRA

I consented, and then I cheated Loxias.

CHORUS

When you were already possessed by your inspired abilities?

CASSANDRA

I was already prophesying to my fellow-citizens about all they were to suffer.

259 With πόλιν . . . λέγουσαν "speaking about a city" compare *Little Iliad* fr. 1 West Ἴλιον ἀείδω καὶ Δαρδανίην εὔπωλον, or indeed *Odyssey* 1.1 ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς δῆτ᾽ ἄνατος ἦσθα Λοξίου κότῳ;

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἔπειθον οὐδέν᾽ οὐδέν, ὡς τάδ᾽ ἤμπλακον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡμῖν γε μὲν δὴ πιστὰ θεσπίζειν δοκεῖς.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἰοὺ ἰού, ὦ ὦ κακά·

ὑπ᾽ αὖ με δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος
στροβεῖ ταράσσων φροιμίοις †ἐφημένους†.
ὁρᾶτε τούσδε τοὺς δόμοις ἐφημένους
νέους, ὀνείρων προσφερεῖς μορφώμασιν;
παῖδες θανόντες, ὡσπερεὶ πρὸς οὐ φίλων,
χεῖρας κρεῶν πλήθοντες, οἰκείας βορᾶς,
σὺν ἐντέροις τε σπλάγχν᾽, ἐποίκτιστον γέμος,
πρέπουσ᾽ ἔχοντες, ὧν πατὴρ ἐγεύσατο.
ἐκ τῶνδε ποινάς φημι βουλεύειν τινὰ
οἰκουρόν, οἴμοι, τῷ μολόντι δεσπότῃ,
†λέοντ᾽ ἄναλκιν† ἐν λέχει στρωφώμενον.

1211 ἄνατος Canter: ἄνακτος *f*.

1216 ἐφημένους *f* (from 1217): ἐφημένοις *z*: δυσφροιμίοις Hermann: δυσχειμέροις A. Y. Campbell.

1219 οὐ West: τῶν *f*.

1225, 1224 transposed by S. R. West.

1224 λέοντ᾽ ἄναλκιν *f*: λύκον λέοντος Fraenkel: γύννιν λέοντος Merkelbach: perh. λύκον γ᾽ ἄναλκιν (λύκον τ᾽ ἄναλκιν Zakas).

CHORUS

How then did you remain unharmed by the wrath of Loxias?

CASSANDRA

After I had done him this wrong, I could never make anyone believe anything I said.

CHORUS

Well, to *us* your prophecies seem quite credible.

CASSANDRA

Iou, iou! Oh! Oh! The pain! The terrible agony of true prophecy is coming over me again, whirling me around and deranging me in the ‹fierce storm›[260] of its onset. [*Pointing wildly*] Do you see these young ones, sitting near the house, looking like dream-shapes? Children dead, as if at the hands of enemies,[261] their hands conspicuously filled with the flesh on which their close kin fed, holding the offals and entrails—a most pitiable burden—which their father tasted. For this, I say, revenge is being planned upon the returning master of the house by someone who stayed at home[262]—alas!—a cowardly wolf[263] treating the mas-

260 I translate A. Y. Campbell's conjecture; the true text cannot be recovered with certainty, a word having intruded here in the manuscripts from the next line.

261 i.e. "having obviously died by violence"; but ὡσπερεί also betrays Cassandra's knowledge—which the audience share—that the children were in fact killed by a φίλος.

262 Aegisthus, here for the first time clearly alluded to; the Elders, taunting him in 1625–7, similarly link his adultery, his failure to join the Trojan expedition, and his planning of the murder.

263 I translate my tentative conjecture. The transmitted reading, "lion", curiously anticipating L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, probably derives from a marginal note comparing this passage to 1258–9.

νεῶν δ' ἄπαρχος Ἰλίου τ' ἀναστάτης
ἄτης λαθραίου τεὐξεται κακῇ τύχῃ·
οὐκ οἶδεν οἷα γλῶσσα μισητῆς κυνός,
λείξασα καὶ κλίνασα φαιδρὸν οὖς, δάκνει.
τοιάδε τόλμαν θῆλυς ἄρσενος φονεύς·
ἔστιν—τί νιν καλοῦσα δυσφιλὲς δάκος
τύχοιμ' ἄν; ἀμφίσβαιναν, ἢ Σκύλλαν τινὰ
οἰκοῦσαν ἐν πέτραισι, ναυτίλων βλάβην,
θυίουσαν Ἅιδου μητέρ' ἄσπονδόν τ' Ἄρη
φίλοις πνέουσαν; ὡς δ' ἐπωλολύξατο
ἡ παντότολμος, ὥσπερ ἐν μάχης τροπῇ·
δοκεῖ δὲ χαίρειν νοστίμῳ σωτηρίᾳ.
καὶ τῶνδ' ὅμοιον εἴ τι μὴ πείθω· τί γάρ;
τὸ μέλλον ἥξει, καὶ σύ μ' ἐν τάχει παρὼν
ἄγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτίρας ἐρεῖς.

{1226} ἐμῷ· φέρειν γὰρ χρὴ τὸ δούλιον ζυγόν *f*: del. Ludwig.
1227 δ' anon.: τ' *f*.
1230, 1228, 1229 transposed by Lawson.
1229 λείξασα Tyrwhitt, καὶ κλίνασα φαιδρὸν οὖς H. L. Ahrens, δάκνει West: λέξασα καὶ κτείνασα φαιδρόνους δίκην *f*.
1231 τόλμαν Martin: τολμᾶ vel sim. *f*.
1235 Ἄρη Franz (Ἄρην Lobeck): ἀρὰν *f*.

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264 lit. "licking".

265 For dogs laying back their ears in sign of pleasure and friendliness, cf. *Odyssey* 17.302; Hesiod, *Theogony* 771; Sophocles fr. 687 (the last two referring to Cerberus, who, like Clytaemestra, fawns to deceive).

ter's bed as his own. The commander of the fleet, the destroyer of Ilium, is about to suffer an evil fate and meet a destruction that will spring from concealment: he does not know what kind of bite comes after the fawning[264] tongue of that hateful bitch and the cheerful inclination of her ear.[265] Such is the audacity of this female who murders a male; she is—what loathsome beast's name can I call her by, to hit the mark? An amphisbaena,[266] or some Scylla[267] dwelling among the rocks, the bane of sailors, a raging, hellish mother,[268] breathing out truceless war against her nearest and dearest? What a cry of triumph she raised,[269] as if an enemy had been routed in battle, this woman who will stop at nothing!—though she pretends to be delighted at his safe return. And if I don't persuade you that all this is true, it makes no difference—how could it? The future will

266 A fabulous serpent with a head at each end; cf. Aristophanes fr. 457 K-A, Lucan 9.719.

267 See *Odyssey* 12.73–126, 201–259, 445–6. Scylla had once been a human being, and had been transformed after killing her father; see *Cho.* 613–622.

268 This may be taken to refer to Clytaemestra as the avenger of Iphigeneia and/or to her hostility to her son, whom she has already banished (877–886) and whom in some versions of the story she later attempted to kill in defence of Aegisthus. In art, from the mid sixth century onwards, she is often shown in scenes of the death of Aegisthus, running towards Orestes with an axe (Prag C7a, C11, C12, C15–22, C24, C25); cf. *Cho.* 889.

269 Most probably referring to the tone of Clytaemestra's prayer in 973–4; it is very unlikely that she literally uttered an ὀλολυγμός at that time.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὴν μὲν Θυέστου δαῖτα παιδείων κρεῶν
ξυνῆκα καὶ πέφρικα, καὶ φόβος μ᾽ ἔχει
κλυόντ᾽ ἀληθῶς οὐδὲν ἐξεικασμένα·
τὰ δ᾽ ἀλλ᾽ ἀκουσας ἐκ δρόμου πεσὼν τρέχω.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

Ἀγαμέμνονός σέ φημ᾽ ἐπόψεσθαι μόρον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὔφημον, ὦ τάλαινα, κοίμησον στόμα.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἀλλ᾽ οὔτι Παιὼν τῷδ᾽ ἐπιστατεῖ λόγῳ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὔκ, εἴπερ ἔσται γ᾽· ἀλλὰ μὴ γένοιτό πως.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

σὺ μὲν κατεύχῃ, τοῖς δ᾽ ἀποκτείνειν μέλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίνος πρὸς ἀνδρὸς τοῦτ᾽ ἄχος πορσύνεται;

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἦ κάρτα μακρὰν παρεκόπης χρησμῶν ἐμῶν.

1240 μ᾽ ἐν anon., Casaubon: μὴν *f.*
1242 παιδείων Schütz: παιδίων *f.*
1249 εἴπερ ἔσται Schütz: εἰ πάρεσταί *f.*

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270 lit. "I am running, having fallen out of the chase".

come, and you will soon behold it, take pity on me, and call me all too true a prophet.

CHORUS

I understood about Thyestes feasting on his children's flesh, and I shudder, and terror grips me, now I have heard it in terms that truly were anything but figurative. But as to the rest of what I've heard, I'm running like a hound that's lost the scent.[270]

CASSANDRA

I say that you are about to gaze upon the death of Agamemnon.

CHORUS

Speak only of good things, poor girl; put your tongue to sleep.

CASSANDRA

But there is no divine Healer in attendance on these words.[271]

CHORUS

No, if it's really going to happen; but please, somehow, let it not happen!

CASSANDRA

While you are praying, *they* are concerned with slaying!

CHORUS

By what man is this grievous crime being committed?

[271] She chooses to take *εὔφημον* "speaking auspiciously, refraining from inauspicious speech" in its other sense "associated with cries or songs (*paeans*) of joy", and asserts that the healing god *Paeon* (= Apollo, cf. 146) will provide no remedy for her words, i.e. that what she has prophesied is inescapable.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῦ γὰρ τελοῦντος οὐ ξυνῆκα μηχανήν.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ἄγαν γ' Ἕλλην' ἐπίσταμαι φάτιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ τὰ πυθόκραντα· δυσμαθῆ δ' ὅμως.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

παπαῖ·
οἷον τὸ πῦρ ἐπέρχεται·
ὀτοτοῖ, Λύκει' Ἄπολλον· οἳ 'γὼ 'γὼ <κακῶν>.
αὕτη δίπους λέαινα, συγκοιμωμένη
λύκῳ λέοντος εὐγενοῦς ἀπουσίᾳ,
κτενεῖ με τὴν τάλαιναν, ὡς δὲ φάρμακον
τεύχουσα κἀμοῦ μισθὸν ἐνθήσει ποτῷ·
ἐπεύχεται, θήγουσα φωτὶ φάσγανον,
ἐμῆς ἀγωγῆς ἀντιτείσεσθαι φόνον.
τί δῆτ' ἐμαυτῆς καταγέλωτ' ἔχω τάδε
καὶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μαντεία περὶ δέρῃ στέφη;
σὲ μὲν πρὸ μοίρας τῆς ἐμῆς διαφθερῶ·

1252 *κάρτα μακρὰν* Fraenkel: *κάρτ' ἄρ' ἂν f.*
1252 *παρεκόπης* Hartung: *παρεσκόπης z*: *παρεσκόπεις f.*
1255 *δυσμαθῆ z*: *δυσπαθῆ* G F.
1256 *ἐπέρχεται* Wilamowitz: *ἐπέρχεται δέ μοι f.*
1257 *οἳ 'γὼ 'γὼ <κακῶν>* West: *οἳ ἐγὼ ἐγὼ f.*
1258 *δίπους* Victorius: *δίπλους f.*
1261 *ποτῷ* Scaliger: *κότῳ f.*
1263 *ἀντιτείσεσθαι* (*-τίσ-*) Blomfield: *ἀντιτίσασθαι f.*

CASSANDRA

You have certainly strayed a long way from the track of my oracle!

CHORUS

Because I didn't understand what method he, the perpetrator, could use.

CASSANDRA

And yet I know the Greek language all too well.[272]

CHORUS

The pronouncements of Pytho are also in Greek, but they're still hard to understand.

CASSANDRA

Papai! How the fire comes upon me! Ototoi! Apollo the Wolf-god![273] Ah me, ah me, <the pain!> [*Pointing wildly again*] This is the two-footed lioness, sleeping with a wolf while the noble lion was away, who will kill me, wretched that I am: like someone compounding a poison, she will put into the brew something to pay me out as well. As she whets a sword for her man, she boasts that the wages of my being brought here will be murder. [*Shaking out her prophetic robe*] Why, then, have I got this gear on to mock me,

272 Probably referring in particular to her mastery of Greek grammatical genders (which were thought of as an especially difficult feature of the language for foreigners: cf. Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusae* 1102–1222; Timotheus, *GL* 790.160). She has not only called Agamemnon's murderer "female" (1231) but used at least thirteen words of distinctively feminine inflection to refer directly to her.

273 Cf. *Seven* 146–7, *Supp.* 686.

ἴτ' ἐς φθόρον· πεσόντα γ' ὧδ' ἀμείβομαι·
ἄλλην τιν' ἄτης ἀντ' ἐμοῦ πλουτίζετε.
ἰδοὺ δ', Ἀπόλλων αὐτὸς οὐκδύων ἐμὲ
χρηστηρίαν ἐσθῆτ'. ἐποπτεύσας δέ με
καὶν τοῖσδε κόσμοις καταγελωμένην μέγα
φίλων ὑπ' ἐχθρῶν οὐ διχορρόπως, μάτην
< >·
ἁλωμένη δέ, φοιτὰς ὡς ἀγύρτρια,
πτωχὸς τάλαινα λιμοθνὴς ἠνεσχόμην·
καὶ νῦν ὁ μάντις μάντιν ἐκπράξας ἐμὲ
ἀπήγαγ' ἐς τοιάσδε θανασίμους τύχας,
βωμοῦ πατρῴου δ' ἀντ' ἐπίξηνον μένει
θερμὸν κοπέντος φοινίῳ προσφάγματι.
οὐ μὴν ἄτιμοί γ' ἐκ θεῶν τεθνήξομεν.
ἥξει γὰρ ἡμῶν ἄλλος αὖ τιμάορος,
μητροκτόνον φίτυμα, ποινάτωρ πατρός·
φυγὰς δ' ἀλήτης τῆσδε γῆς ἀπόξενος
κάτεισιν ἄτας τάσδε θριγκώσων φίλοις·

1267 *πεσόντα γ' ὧδ'* Jacob: *πεσόντ' ἀγαθὼ δ' f.*
1267 *ἀμείβομαι f*: *ἀμείψομαι z.*
1268 *ἄτης* anon.: *ἄτην f.*
1269 *οὐκδύων* Enger: *ἐκδύων f.*
1271 *μέγα* Hermann: *μετὰ f.*
after 1272 lacuna posited by Denniston: *<τὰ πιστὰ θεσπίζουσαν, οὐδὲν ἤρκεσεν>* e.g. West.
1273 *ἁλωμένη* Blaydes (*κἀλωμένη* Heath): *καλουμένη f.*
1277 *ἀντ' ἐπίξηνον* Auratus: *ἀντεπίξηνον f.*
1278 *θερμὸν* Schütz, *κοπέντος* Headlam: *θερμῶ κοπείσης f.*
1279 *ἄτιμοί z*: *ἄτιμόν f.*

and this staff, and the prophetic bands about my neck?[274] I'll destroy *you* before meeting my own fate! [*She breaks her staff and throws the pieces to the ground.*] Go to perdition [*throwing off her neck-bands*]—now you're on the ground, this is how I get my own back on you [*trampling on them*]! Make some other woman rich with ruin, instead of me! [*As she tears off her robe*] Look, it is Apollo himself who is stripping me of my prophetic garb.[275] He looked on when I, wearing all these accoutrements, was being roundly and unanimously mocked by friends who acted like enemies ‹while I prophesied the truth› in vain, ‹and he did nothing to help me›;[276] I endured having to wander like an itinerant begging priestess, a wretched, starving pauper. And now he, the Seer, has collected his debt from me, the seer, by hauling me off to this deadly fate; and instead of my father's altar, what awaits me is a butcher's block, still warm with the bloody slaughter of the man[277] cut down before me. Nevertheless, we shall not, in death, remain unavenged by the gods. There will come yet another to take vengeance for us, an offspring that will kill his mother and exact requital for his father. An exile, a

[274] For the staff and woollen bands as emblems of a priest or prophet of Apollo, cf. *Iliad* 1.28.

[275] Most likely the ἀγρηνόν, a reticulated woollen overgarment worn by "Teiresias or other prophets" on stage (Pollux 4.116, cf. Hesychius α776, 777). Agamemnon, before being helplessly slaughtered, will have a net-like robe thrown over him; Cassandra, before going open-eyed to her death, deliberately divests herself of the net-like robe she is wearing.

[276] I translate West's *exempli gratia* supplement.

[277] Agamemnon.

ὀμώμοται γὰρ ὅρκος ἐκ θεῶν μέγας,
ἄξειν νιν ὑπτίασμα κειμένου πατρός.
τί δῆτ' ἐγὼ κάτοικτος ὧδ' ἀναστένω;
ἐπεὶ τὸ πρῶτον εἶδον Ἰλίου πόλιν
πράξασαν ὡς ἔπραξεν, οἳ δ' εἷλον πόλιν
οὕτως ἀπαλλάσσουσιν ἐν θεῶν κρίσει,
ἰοῦσα †πράξω† τλήσομαι τὸ κατθανεῖν·
Ἅιδου πύλας δὲ τάσδ' ἐγὼ προσεννέπω.
ἐπεύχομαι δὲ καιρίας πληγῆς τυχεῖν,
ὡς ἀσφάδαστος, αἱμάτων εὐθνησίμως
ἀπορρυέντων, ὄμμα συμβάλω τόδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πολλὰ μὲν τάλαινα, πολλὰ δ' αὖ σοφὴ
γύναι, μακρὰν ἔτεινας· εἰ δ' ἐτητύμως
μόρον τὸν αὑτῆς οἶσθα, πῶς θεηλάτου
βοὸς δίκην πρὸς βωμὸν εὐτόλμως πατεῖς;

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλυξις, οὔ, ξένοι, χρόνον πλέω.

1290 transposed by Hermann to follow 1283.
1284 ἄξειν *f*: ἄξει *z*.
1285 κάτοικτος Scaliger: κάτοικος *f*.
1287 εἶλον Musgrave: εἶχον *f*. 1288 ἐν G *z*: ἐκ F.
1289 ἰοῦσα πράξω *f*: ἰοῦσ' ὑπάρξω Heyse: ἰοῦσα κἀγὼ Heath. 1291 τάσδ' ἐγὼ Canter: τὰς λέγω *f*.
1293 εὐθνησίμως Bothe: εὐθνησίμων *f*.
1295 δ' αὖ *z*: δὲ *f*. 1299 χρόνον Hermann: χρόνῳ *f*.

wanderer, banished from this land, he will return to put the coping-stone on these disasters for his family; for the gods have sworn a great oath that his father's corpse lying helpless[278] will draw him back. So why do I lament and groan aloud like this? Now that I have seen the city of Ilium suffer as it suffered, now that those who captured the city are getting this kind of verdict before the tribunal of the gods, I too shall go[279] and have the courage to face death. [*She moves towards the palace, and halts in front of the door.*] I address these gates as the gates of Hades. And I pray that I may receive a single mortal stroke, and close these eyes without a struggle, my blood flowing out in an easy death.

CHORUS

Woman unfortunate in so many ways and also wise in so many ways, you have spoken at length; but if you truly have foreknowledge of your own death, how comes it that you are walking boldly towards it like an ox driven by god to the altar?[280]

CASSANDRA

There is no escape, friends, none, for any longer time.

278 lit. "the supine position of his father lying", i.e. "his father lying on his back".

279 I translate Heath's emendation; the transmitted text2 is unintelligible, and *πραξ-* has probably infiltrated from 1287.

280 i.e. a sacrificial beast that walks to the altar of its own accord without any human leading or driving it there; cf. Philostratus, *Heroicus* 56.3 (p. 74.8–9 De Lannoy), referring to the cult of Achilles on the White Island, where the oxen are said to present themselves for sacrifice.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ δ' ὕστατός γε τοῦ χρόνου πρεσβεύεται.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἥκει τόδ' ἦμαρ· σμικρὰ κερδανῶ φυγῇ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἴσθι τλήμων οὖσ' ἀπ' εὐτόλμου φρενός.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

οὐδεὶς ἀκούει ταῦτα τῶν εὐδαιμόνων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὐκλεῶς τοι κατθανεῖν χάρις βροτῷ.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἰώ πάτερ σοῦ σῶν τε γενναίων τέκνων.

ἀλλ' εἶμι κἀν δόμοισι κωκύσουσ' ἐμὴν

Ἀγαμέμνονός τε μοῖραν· ἀρκείτω βίος.

ἰὼ ξένοι—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἐστὶ χρῆμα; τίς σ' ἀποστρέφει φόβος;

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

φῦ φῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί τοῦτ' ἔφυξας; εἴ τι μὴ φρενῶν στύγος.

1305 σῶν Auratus: τῶν *f*.

1313–5 transposed by A. Y. Campbell (1313–4 by Enger) to follow 1305.

1307–8 φῦ φῦ and ἔφυξας Heyse: φεῦ φεῦ and ἔφευξας *f*.

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281 "Cassandra's thoughts instantly fly to the death of her father and [brothers] as the experience she has had of what is called so glorious, the death of the brave" (J. B. Conington, *The*

CHORUS

But people put special value on the last bit of time they have.

CASSANDRA

That day has come. I shall gain little by running away.

CHORUS

Well, I tell you, your resolution comes from a courageous heart.

CASSANDRA

That's something that's never said about anyone who is happy.

CHORUS

But it's a gratification to any mortal, you know, to die creditably.

CASSANDRA

Ió, my father, for you and your noble sons![281] Now I shall go to bewail, even within the house, my own fate and Agamemnon's. Enough of life! [*She makes to go inside, but suddenly recoils and cries out.*] Help, friends!

CHORUS

What's the matter? What fear is making you turn away?

CASSANDRA

Ugh, ugh!

CHORUS

Why are you going "ugh" like that? Unless it's some mental horror.

Agamemnon of Aeschylus [London, 1848] 143); the audience will probably think of the sacrilegious slaughter of Priam and the abuse of Hector's corpse.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

φόνον δόμοι πνέουσιν αἱματοσταγῆ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ πῶς; τόδ' ὄζει θυμάτων ἐφεστίων.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ὅμοιος ἀτμὸς ὥσπερ ἐκ τάφου πρέπει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐ Σύριον ἀγλάισμα δώμασιν λέγεις.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

οὗτοι δυσοίζω θάμνον ὡς ὄρνις φόβῳ
ἄλλως· θανούσῃ μαρτυρεῖτέ μοι τόδε,
ὅταν γυνὴ γυναικὸς ἀντ' ἐμοῦ θάνῃ
ἀνήρ τε δυσδάμαρτος ἀντ' ἀνδρὸς πέσῃ·
ἐπιξενοῦμαι ταῦτα δ' ὡς θανουμένη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ τλῆμον, οἰκτίρω σε θεσφάτου μόρου.

ΚΑΣΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ἄπαξ ἔτ' εἰπεῖν ῥῆσιν ἢ θρῆνον θέλω
ἐμὸν τὸν αὑτῆς· ἡλίου δ' ἐπεύχομαι
πρὸς ὕστατον φῶς, <δεσπότου> τιμαόροις

1309 *φόνον z*: *φόβον f*.
1317 ἄλλως· Hermann: ἀλλ' ὡς *f*.
1323 ἡλίου Jacob: ἡλίῳ *f*.
1324 δεσπότου M. Schmidt: τοῖς ἐμοῖς (from 1325) *f*.

CASSANDRA

The house breathes blood-dripping murder!

CHORUS

What on earth do you mean? That's the smell of sacrifices at the hearth.

CASSANDRA

The scent is very plain—just like the whiff of a grave!

CHORUS

You can't be talking about the Syrian fragrance[282] which is adding splendour to the palace!

CASSANDRA

I am not shying away out of empty terror, as a bird does from a bush.[283] Bear me witness of this[284] after my death, when a woman dies in return for me, a woman, and a man falls in return for a man who had an evil wife. As one about to die, I claim this as my guest-right.

CHORUS

Unhappy one, I pity you for the death you have foretold.

CASSANDRA

I wish to make one more speech—or should I say dirge, my own dirge for myself. Looking on my last sunlight, I pray that my enemies may pay to my master's avengers the pen-

282 Referring to incense; cf. 94–96, and (for its association with Syria) Euripides, *Bacchae* 144, and Hermippus fr. 63.13.

283 "The bird that hath been limèd in a bush / With trembling wings misdoubteth every bush" (Shakespeare, *Henry VI Part 3* V.vi.13–14)—even though most bushes do not in fact conceal limed twigs or other traps.

284 viz. that there was good reason for my fear and disgust.

ἐχθροὺς φόνευσιν τὴν ἐμὴν τίνειν ὁμοῦ,
δούλης θανούσης, εὐμαροῦς χειρώματος.
ἰὼ βρότεια πράγματ'· εὐτυχοῦντα μὲν
σκιᾷ τις ἂν πρέψειεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχῇ,
βολαῖς ὑγρώσσων σπόγγος ὤλεσεν γραφήν.
καὶ ταῦτ' ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἰκτίρω πολύ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὸ μὲν εὖ πράσσειν ἀκόρεστον ἔφυ
πᾶσι βροτοῖσιν· δακτυλοδείκτων δ'
οὔτις ἀπειπὼν εἴργει μελάθρων,
"μηκέτ' ἐσέλθῃς", τάδε φωνῶν.
καὶ τῷδε πόλιν μὲν ἑλεῖν ἔδοσαν
μάκαρες Πριάμου,
θεοτίμητος δ' οἴκαδ' ἱκάνει·
νῦν δ' εἰ προτέρων αἶμ' ἀποτείσῃ
καὶ τοῖσι θανοῦσι θανὼν ἄλλων
ποινὰς θανάτων ἐπικράνῃ,
τίς ἂν ἐξεύξαιτο βροτῶν ἀσινεῖ
δαίμονι φῦναι ταδ' ἀκούων;

1325 ἐχθροὺς Pearson, *φόνευσιν* Bothe, *τὴν ἐμὴν* Heller: ἐχθροῖς *φονεῦσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς f.*
1328 *ἂν πρέψειεν* Boissonade: cf. Aesch. fr. 439: *ἀντρέψειεν f.*
1334 *μηκέτ' ἐσέλθῃς* Hermann: *μηκέτι δ' εἰσέλθῃς f.*
1338 *ἀποτείσῃ* Zakas: *ἀποτίσει f.*
1340 *ἐπικράνῃ* Zakas: *ἐπικρανεῖ f*: *ἄγαν ἐπικρανεῖ z.*
1341 *ἐξεύξαιτο* Schneidewin: *εὔξαιτο f.*

alty for my murder as well—for the death of a slave, an easy victim. Alas for the fortunes of mortals! When they prosper, one may liken them to a shadow; and if things go badly, a few strokes of a damp sponge wipe their image out. And I pity the latter much more than the former. [*She goes inside.*]

CHORUS

All mortals have by nature an insatiable appetite
for success; and no one bans it
and keeps it away from houses at which fingers are
pointed,[285]
saying "Don't come in here any more!"
So to this man it was granted by the Blessed Ones
to capture the city of Priam,
and he comes home honoured by the gods;
but now, if he pays for the blood shed by his forefathers
and by dying causes the dead
to exact further deaths as a penalty,[286]
what mortal, hearing this, can boast
that he was born to a destiny free from harm?

A sudden cry from within cuts across the CHORUS*'s last words.*

[285] In admiration and/or envy.

[286] This brief clause spans three generations: "the dead" (Iphigeneia and/or the children of Thyestes) are avenged by the death of Agamemnon, but this will in turn give rise to "further deaths" (those foretold by Cassandra in 1279–84, 1318–9 and 1324–5, though the Elders did not fully understand her) which will still have arisen from the same original cause. Cf. *Choephori* 1065–74.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ὤμοι, πέπληγμαι καιρίαν πληγὴν ἔσω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σῖγα· τίς πληγὴν ἀυτεῖ καιρίως οὐτασμένος;

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ὤμοι μάλ᾽ αὖθις δευτέραν πεπληγμένος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοὔργον εἴργασθαι δοκεῖ μοι βασιλέως οἰμώγμασιν·
ἀλλὰ κοινωσώμεθ᾽ ἥν πως ἀσφαλῆ βουλεύματ᾽ ᾖ.
— ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῖν τὴν ἐμὴν γνώμην λέγω,
πρὸς δῶμα δεῦρ᾽ ἀστοῖσι κηρύσσειν βοήν.
— ἐμοὶ δ᾽ ὅπως τάχιστά γ᾽ ἐμπεσεῖν δοκεῖ
καὶ πρᾶγμ᾽ ἐλέγχειν σὺν νεορρύτῳ ξίφει.
— κἀγὼ τοιούτου γνώματος κοινωνὸς ὢν
ψηφίζομαι τὸ δρᾶν τι· μὴ μέλλειν δ᾽ ἀκμή.
— ὁρᾶν πάρεστι· φροιμιάζονται γὰρ ὡς
τυραννίδος σημεῖα πράσσοντες πόλει.
— χρονίζομεν γάρ· οἱ δὲ τῆς μελλοῦς κλέος
πέδον πατοῦντες οὐ καθεύδουσιν χερί.

1347 *βουλεύματ᾽ ᾖ* Enger: *βουλεύματα f.*
1353 *το δρᾶν τι·* Musgrave: *τί δρᾶν· τὸ f.* 1356 *τῆς μελλοῦς t*: *τῆς μελλούσης* (*ης* above the line) *f*: *μελλούσης z.*

287 lit. "cry", i.e. cry for immediate help. The Elders, this man suggests, should either go themselves or send messengers to the *ἀγορά* to summon the citizens to storm the palace and overpower the assassins.

288 lit. "the (high) reputation", probably with allusion to the proverb *σπεῦδε βραδέως* "make haste slowly", "more haste, less

AGAMEMNON [*within*]

Ah me, I am struck down, a deep and deadly blow!

CHORUS

Hush! Who's that screaming about being struck and mortally wounded?

AGAMEMNON [*within*]

Ah me again, struck a second time!

CHORUS

To judge by the king's cries, I think the deed has been done. Let us deliberate and see if there might be any safe plan to follow.

Each member of the CHORUS *now gives his individual opinion.*

1. I tell you what my proposal is: to proclaim an urgent call[287] for the citizens to come here to the palace.

2. I think we should burst in straight away, and get proof of the crime when the blood is flowing freshly from the sword.

3. I share that opinion, and vote for doing something. This is a moment for not delaying.

4. You can see that. Their first actions show the behaviour of men giving the signal that they mean to be tyrants of this city.

5. Yes, we're wasting time, while they are trampling the much-touted virtues[288] of delay into the ground and not letting their hands sleep.

speed" (Polyaenus, *Strategemata* 8.24.4; Aulus Gellius 11.10.5; Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 25.4).

— *οὐκ οἶδα βουλῆς ἥστινος τυχὼν λέγω·*
τοῦ δρῶντός ἐστι καὶ τὸ βουλεῦσαι †πέρι†.
— *κἀγὼ τοιοῦτός εἰμ', ἐπεὶ δυσμηχανῶ*
1361 *λόγοισι τὸν θανόντ' ἀνιστάναι πάλιν.*
— *ἦ καὶ βίον τείνοντες ὧδ' ὑπείξομεν*
δόμων καταισχυντῆρσι τοῖσδ' ἡγουμένοις;
— *ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀνεκτόν, ἀλλὰ κατθανεῖν κρατεῖ·*
1365 *πεπαιτέρα γὰρ μοῖρα τῆς τυραννίδος.*
— *ἦ γὰρ τεκμηρίοισιν ἐξ οἰμωγμάτων*
μαντευσόμεσθα τἀνδρὸς ὡς ὀλωλότος;
— *σάφ' εἰδότας χρὴ τῶνδε μυθεῖσθαι πέρι·*
τὸ γὰρ τοπάζειν τοῦ σάφ' εἰδέναι δίχα.
— *ταύτην ἐπαινεῖν πάντοθεν πληθύνομαι,*
1371 *τρανῶς Ἀτρείδην εἰδέναι κυροῦνθ' ὅπως.*

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

πολλῶν πάροιθεν καιρίως εἰρημένων
τἀναντί' εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἐπαισχυνθήσομαι.

1359 *περὶ f*: *πάρος* Auratus: *τί δρᾷ* Page.
1362 *τείνοντες* Auratus: *κτείνοντες f*.
1368 *μυθεῖσθαι* J. G. Schneider: *μυθοῦσθαι f*.

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289 This must be the approximate sense (and is approximately captured both by Auratus' and by Page's emendations); the transmitted text is unintelligible. 290 lit. "riper".

291 Since seven of the previous eleven speakers had actually supported immediate and decisive action, they must now have changed their minds, and the audience must be aware that they have done so; hence my stage-direction above. 292 lit. "to know clearly that the son of Atreus is faring—however".

6. I don't know what plan to hit on and suggest. One who wants to act must first plan what action to take.[289]

7. I agree, since I can see no way of bringing the man back from the dead just with words.

8. Are we really to prolong our lives like this by surrendering to the rulership of these defilers of the royal house?

9. No, it's intolerable, and it's better to die! That's a less bitter[290] fate than living under tyranny.

10. Are we to divine that the man is dead just from the evidence of some cries we hear?

11. We must talk about these things on the basis of firm knowledge. Guesswork is one thing, firm knowledge is another. [*All indicate by gesture their agreement with this view.*]

12. I have full support from all sides to approve this proposal,[291] that we must have clear knowledge of how things are with the son of Atreus.[292]

As the CHORUS *turn towards the palace, as if about to enter and investigate, the* ekkyklēma *platform is rolled out of the door. On it is* CLYTAEMESTRA, *sword in hand, her clothes stained with blood, standing over the dead bodies of* AGAMEMNON *and* CASSANDRA. AGAMEMNON *is slumped in a silver bathtub, and is enveloped from head to foot in a richly embroidered (but now also blood-stained) robe.*

CLYTAEMESTRA

I have said many things hitherto to suit the needs of the moment, and I shall not be ashamed to contradict them

πῶς γάρ τις ἐχθροῖς ἐχθρὰ πορσύνων, φίλοις
δοκοῦσιν εἶναι, πημονῆς ἀρκύστατ' ἂν
φάρξειεν ὕψος κρεῖσσον ἐκπηδήματος;
ἐμοὶ δ' ἀγὼν ὅδ' οὐκ ἀφρόντιστος πάλαι
νείκης παλαιᾶς ἦλθε, σὺν χρόνῳ γε μήν.
ἔστηκα δ' ἔνθ' ἔπαισ' ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις·
οὕτω δ' ἔπραξα, καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι,
ὡς μήτε φεύγειν μήτ' ἀμύνασθαι μόρον·
ἄπειρον ἀμφίβληστρον, ὥσπερ ἰχθύων,
περιστοχίζω, πλοῦτον εἵματος κακόν·
παίω δέ νιν δίς, κἀν δυοῖν οἰμωγμάτοιν
μεθῆκεν αὐτοῦ κῶλα· καὶ πεπτωκότι
τρίτην ἐπενδίδωμι, τοῦ κατὰ χθονὸς
Διὸς νεκρῶν σωτῆρος εὐκταίαν χάριν.
οὕτω τὸν αὐτοῦ θυμὸν ὁρμαίνει πεσών,
κἀκφυσιῶν ὀξεῖαν αἵματος σφαγὴν
βάλλει μ' ἐρεμνῇ ψακάδι φοινίας δρόσου,

1375 πημονῆς Auratus, ἀρκύστατ' ἂν Elmsley: πημονὴν ἀρκύστατον *f.*
1378 νείκης Heath: νίκης *f.*
1383 περιστοχίζω West: περιστοιχίζων F: περιστϊχίζων G: περιστιχίζω *z.*
1384 οἰμωγμάτοιν Elmsley: οἰμώγμασιν *f.*
1387 Διὸς Enger: Ἄιδου vel sim. *f.*

293 lit. "fortify the place where the nets are set up".

294 From other descriptions of the robe/net (*Cho.* 980–4, 997–1004; *Eum.* 634–5) we gather that it was thrown over Agamemnon like a tent and covered him completely, that it fettered his hands

now. How else could anyone, pursuing hostilities against enemies who think they are friends, set up their hunting-nets[293] to a height too great to overleap? This showdown was something that had long been in my thoughts, arising from a long-standing grievance; now it has come—at long last. I stand where I struck, with my work accomplished. I did it this way—I won't deny it—so that he could neither escape death nor defend himself. I staked out around him an endless net,[294] as one does for fish—a wickedly opulent garment. Then I struck him twice, and on the spot, in the space of two cries, his limbs gave way; and when he had fallen I added a third stroke, in thanksgiving to the Zeus of the underworld,[295] the saviour of the dead, for the fulfilment of my prayers. Thus, having fallen, he forced out his own soul,[296] and he coughed up a sharp spurt of blood and hit me with a black shower of gory dew[297]—at which I

and hobbled his feet, and that it was the sort of device that a robber might use. This strongly suggests, as do other fifth-century references to this robe (Sophocles fr. 526; Euripides, *Orestes* 25—both of which also call the robe "endless"), that it is imagined as something like what is already shown, a decade or so before the *Oresteia*, on the Dokimasia Painter's krater (Boston 63.1246 = A6 Prag), in which Agamemnon is completely enveloped in a delicate garment that has no holes for his head or arms (though his feet seem to have considerable freedom of movement).

295 i.e. Hades/Pluto (cf. *Supp.* 156–7, 230–1). The collocation τρίτην . . . Διὸς . . . σωτῆρος links this bloodthirsty action, blasphemously, to the third libation after a feast (see on *Supp.* 26).

296 i.e. his last breaths were hard, spasmodic pants.

297 This passage is imitated by Sophocles, *Antigone* 1238–9 (where the blood is that of the dying Haemon embracing the already dead Antigone).

χαίρουσαν οὐδὲν ἧσσον ἢ διοσδότῳ
γάνει σπόρητος κάλυκος ἐν λοχεύμασιν.
εἰ δ' ἦν πρεπόντως ὥστ' ἐπισπένδειν νεκρῷ,
τάδ' ἂν δικαίως ἦν, ὑπερδίκως μὲν οὖν·
τοσῶνδε κρατῆρ' ἐν δόμοις κακῶν ὅδε
πλήσας ἀραίων αὐτὸς ἐκπίνει μολών.
ὡς ὧδ' ἐχόντων, πρέσβος Ἀργείων τόδε,
χαίροιτ' ἄν, εἰ χαίροιτ'· ἐγὼ δ' ἐπεύχομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θαυμάζομέν σου γλῶσσαν, ὡς θρασύστομος,
ἥτις τοιόνδ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ κομπάζεις λόγον.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

πειρᾶσθέ μου γυναικὸς ὡς ἀφράσμονος·
ἐγὼ δ' ἀτρέστῳ καρδίᾳ πρὸς εἰδότας
λέγω—σὺ δ' αἰνεῖν εἴτε με ψέγειν θέλεις,
ὅμοιον· οὗτός ἐστιν Ἀγαμέμνων, ἐμὸς
πόσις, νεκρὸς δέ, τῆσδε δεξιᾶς χερὸς
ἔργον, δικαίας τέκτονος. τάδ' ὧδ' ἔχει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α τί κακόν, ὦ γύναι,
χθονοτρεφὲς ἐδανὸν ἢ ποτὸν
πασαμένα ῥυτᾶς ἐξ ἁλὸς ὀρόμενον
τόδ' ἐπέθου θύος δημοθρόους τ' ἀράς;

1391–2 διοσδότῳ γάνει Porson: Διὸς νότῳ γᾶν εἰ *f*.
1395–8 transposed by West to precede 1393.
1395 *πρεπόντως* anon.: *πρεπόντων f*.
1408 *ῥυτᾶς* Stanley: *ῥύσας* or *ῥυσᾶς f*.

rejoiced no less than the growing corn rejoices in the liquid blessing granted by Zeus when the sheathed ears swell to birth. If it were possible to make a really appropriate libation over the corpse, *this* [*pointing to the blood on her clothes*] is what it should rightly—no, more than rightly be; so many are this man's accursed crimes, with which he has filled a great mixing-bowl in this house, which now, on returning here, he himself has had to drink up. That is the situation, you assembled Argive elders. Rejoice in it or not, as you please.[298] I glory in it!

CHORUS

We are amazed at your language—the arrogance of it—
uttering boastful words like these over your husband!

CLYTAEMESTRA

You are making trial of me as if I were a stupid woman. But I say to you, with undaunted heart, what you know to be true—and I am indifferent to whether you choose to praise or condemn me: this is Agamemnon, my husband, a corpse, the work of this right hand of mine, an artificer of justice. That's how it is.

CHORUS

What evil thing have you tasted, woman—
what food or what drink, whether growing from the earth
or having its origin in the flowing seas—
to make you bring on your head this slaughter and loud public curses?

[298] lit. "You may rejoice, if you rejoice".

1408 ὀρόμενον Canter: ὀρώμενον *z*: ὀρώμενον *f*.

ἀπέδικες ἀπέταμες, ἀπόπολις δ' ἔσῃ,
μῖσος ὄβριμον ἀστοῖς.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

νῦν μὲν δικάζεις ἐκ πόλεως φυγὴν ἐμοὶ
καὶ μῖσος ἀστῶν δημόθρους τ' ἔχειν ἀράς,
οὐδὲν τότ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἐναντίον φέρων,
ὃς οὐ προτιμῶν, ὡσπερεὶ βοτοῦ μόρον
μήλων φλεόντων εὐπόκοις νομεύμασιν,
ἔθυσεν αὑτοῦ παῖδα, φιλτάτην ἐμοὶ
ὠδῖν', ἐπῳδὸν Θρῃκίων ἀημάτων.
οὐ τοῦτον ἐκ γῆς τῆσδε χρῆν σ' ἀνδρηλατεῖν
μιασμάτων ἄποιν'; ἐπήκοος δ' ἐμῶν
ἔργων δικαστὴς τραχὺς εἶ. λέγω δέ σοι
τοιαῦτ' ἀπειλεῖν ὡς παρεσκευασμένης
< >
ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων χειρὶ νικήσαντ' ἐμοῦ
ἄρχειν· ἐὰν δὲ τοὔμπαλιν κραίνῃ θεός,
γνώσῃ διδαχθεὶς ὀψὲ γοῦν τὸ σωφρονεῖν.

1411 ἀπόπολις Casaubon: ἄπολις *f*.
1411 ὄβριμον Pauw: ὅμβριμον *f*.
1414 τότ' anon.: τόδ' *f*.
1418 ἀημάτων Canter: τε λημμάτων *f*.
1419 χρῆν Porson: χρὴ *f*.
1422/3 lacuna posited by Sommerstein (Heyse posited a lacuna of two half-lines after ὁμοίων).

You have cast them[299] aside, you have cut them off; you
shall be banished from the city,
mightily hated by the community.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Now you judge me to have incurred exile from the city, the hatred of the community, and loud public curses; but you didn't show any opposition at all to this man at that former time, when, setting no special value on her—treating her death as if it were the death of one beast out of large flocks of well-fleeced sheep[300]—he sacrificed his own child,[301] the darling offspring of my pangs, as a spell to soothe the Thracian winds. Shouldn't you have driven *him* from this land in punishment for that unclean deed? But when you are a spectator of *my* actions, you judge them harshly. Well, I tell you, if you make such threats, to make them on the understanding that I am prepared <to fight the matter out. I am content for you>[302] to rule, if you defeat me by force in fair fight; but if god decides the issue the other way, then you will be taught, and learn, good sense—though rather late in the day.

299 The object of these verbs is not expressed in the Greek, but probably what Clytaemestra has "cast aside" and "cut off" is the public and their opinions, for which she has just shown the utmost contempt (1393–4, 1403–4).

300 lit. "when sheep abounded in well-fleeced flocks".

301 The first open reference to the sacrifice of Iphigeneia since it was narrated in 184–247.

302 It is extremely difficult to force the transmitted text into a grammatical construction. Probably a line has been lost; the supplement (based on one proposed by Heyse, who posited a lacuna at a different point) gives only an approximate sense.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. α μεγαλόμητις εἶ,
περίφρονα δ᾽ ἔλακες, ὥσπερ οὖν
φονολιβεῖ τύχᾳ φρὴν ἐπιμαίνεται·
λίβος ἐπ᾽ ὀμμάτων αἵματος εὖ πρέπει.
ἄντιτον ἔτι σε χρὴ στερομέναν φίλων
τύμμα τύμματι τεῖσαι.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

καὶ τήνδ᾽ ἀκούσῃ γ᾽ ὁρκίων ἐμῶν θέμιν·
μὰ τὴν τέλειον τῆς ἐμῆς παιδὸς Δίκην
Ἄτην Ἐρινύν θ᾽, αἷσι τόνδ᾽ ἔσφαξ᾽ ἐγώ,
οὔ μοι φόβου μέλαθρον ἐλπὶς ἐμπατεῖ,
ἕως ἂν αἴθῃ πῦρ ἐφ᾽ ἑστίας ἐμῆς
Αἴγισθος, ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν εὖ φρονῶν ἐμοί·
οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀσπὶς οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους.
κεῖται γυναικὸς τῆσδε λυμαντήριος,
Χρυσηΐδων μείλιγμα τῶν ὑπ᾽ Ἰλίῳ,
ἥ τ᾽ αἰχμάλωτος ἥδε καὶ τερασκόπος,
ἡ κοινόλεκτρος τοῦδε θεσφατηλόγος,
πιστὴ ξύνευνος, ναυτίλων δὲ σελμάτων

1428 λίβος Scaliger: λῖπος *f*. 1429 ἄντιτον Weil: *αντίετον f*: ἀτίετον *z*. 1430 τύμματι Casaubon: τύμμα *f*.
1431 ἀκούσῃ γ᾽ Headlam: ἀκούεις *f*.
1435 ἐμῆς Porson: ἐμὰς *f*. 1437 σμικρὰ Blomfield: μικρὰ *f*. 1441 ἡ Karsten: καὶ *f*.

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303 The point of "just as" is that the Elders see Clytaemestra's arrogant words as being caused by her mental derangement (as in

CHORUS

Your cunning is great,
and your words are very proud, just as your mind
is driven mad by your experience of flowing blood[303]—
the flecks of blood show clearly on your eyes.
In time you must pay the price and, stripped of friends,
suffer stroke in return for stroke.

CLYTAEMESTRA

You will now also hear this righteous oath I swear: by the fulfilled Justice that was due for my child, by Ruin and by the Fury, through whose aid I slew this man, no fearful apprehension stalks my house, so long as the fire upon my hearth is kindled by Aegisthus and he remains loyal to me as hitherto; for he is an ample shield of confidence for me. Here lies this abuser of his wife,[304] the charmer of Chryseis and the rest[305] at Troy, and with him this captive, this soothsayer, this chanter of oracles who shared his bed, this faithful consort, this cheap whore[306] of the ship's benches.

1407ff they supposed that her actions and attitude resulted from taking a noxious drug).

[304] lit. "the abuser of this woman" (meaning herself)—an expression that would normally be applied to a rapist or to the seducer of a married woman (cf. *Cho.* 764 [of Aegisthus!]; Euripides, *Hippolytus* 1068, *Bacchae* 354).

[305] lit. "the Chryseises", i.e. Chryseis (*Iliad* 1.11–120, 430–457) and other captive women.

[306] lit. "mast-rubber", where ἱστός "mast" is metaphorical as in Strabo's tale (8.6.20) of the Corinthian *hetaira* who said, when taunted with the fact that she did no proper work, "I've lowered three ἱστοί before now in [snapping her fingers?] *this* length of time". On the obscenity, unparalleled in tragedy, see my discussion in A. Willi ed. *The Language of Greek Comedy* (Oxford, 2002) 155–6.

ἱστοτρίβης. ἄτιμα δ' οὐκ ἐπραξάτην·
ὁ μὲν γὰρ οὕτως, ἡ δέ τοι κύκνου δίκην
τὸν ὕστατον μέλψασα θανάσιμον γόον
κεῖται, φιλήτωρ τοῦδ', ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπήγαγεν
†εὐνῆς† παροψώνημα τῆς ἐμῆς χλιδῆς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. β φεῦ, τίς ἂν ἐν τάχει μὴ περιώδυνος
μηδὲ δεμνιοτήρης
μόλοι τὸν αἰεὶ φέρουσ' ἂν ἡμῖν
μοῖρ' ἀτέλευτον ὕπνον, δαμέντος
φύλακος εὐμενεστάτου
πολέα τλάντος γυναικὸς διαί;
πρὸς γυναικὸς δ' ἀπέφθισεν βίον.

ἐφυμν. α ἰὼ ἰὼ παράνους Ἑλένα,
μία τὰς πολλάς, τὰς πάνυ πολλὰς
ψυχὰς ὀλέσασ' ὑπὸ Τροίᾳ,
νῦν τελέαν πολύμναστον ἐπηνθίσω

1446 φιλήτωρ G z: φιλήτωσ F.
1447 εὐνῆς *f*: perh. e.g. ‹τερπνὸν›.
1447 παροψώνημα Casaubon: παροψόνημα *f*.
1450 ἂν Emperius: ἐν *f*.
1452 εὐμενεστάτου Franz: εὐμενεστάτου καὶ *f*.
1453 πολέα Haupt: πολλὰ *f*.
1455 ἰὼ ἰὼ Blomfield (cf. 1489/1513), παράνους Hermann: ἰὼ παρανόμουσ *f*.
1458 τελέαν Wilamowitz: δὲ τελείαν *f*.

But they have not gone without their due reward: *he* is as he is, while *she*, after singing, swan-like, her final dirge of death,[307] lies here, his lover[308]—and to me she has brought a choice[309] side-dish to the pleasure in which I luxuriate.

CHORUS

Ah, if only some fate could swiftly come—
not a painful one, nor one
that left us long bedridden—that would bring us
eternal, unending sleep, now that he has been laid low,
our most kindly guardian,
who endured so much because of a woman
and now has lost his life at a woman's hands!

Ió, ió, demented Helen,
who alone brought death to so many,
so very many souls at Troy,
now you have adorned yourself with a final adornment,
never to be forgotten,

[307] This is the earliest known reference to the belief, evidently already familiar, that the swan (which, significantly for this passage, has close associations with Apollo) sings just before it dies.

[308] The Greek word is masculine in form, insinuating that Cassandra was the dominant partner and/or that Agamemnon had something effeminate about him.

[309] The transmitted text means, if it means anything, "has brought a side-dish to my bed, to the pleasure in which I luxuriate"; probably, as Fraenkel suggests, *εὐνῆς* "bed" was a mistaken gloss on *χλιδῆς* "luxuriant pleasure" (which here denotes the pleasure, not of sex, but of revenge), perhaps displacing an adjective agreeing with *παροψώνημα*.

δι᾽ αἷμ᾽ ἄνιπτον. ἦ τις ἦν τότ᾽ ἐν δόμοις
Ἔρις ἐρίδματος, ἀνδρὸς οἰζύς.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

μηδὲν θανάτου μοῖραν ἐπεύχου
τοῖσδε βαρυνθείς,
μηδ᾽ εἰς Ἑλένην κότον ἐκτρέψῃς
ὡς ἀνδρολέτειρ᾽, ὡς μία πολλῶν
ἀνδρῶν ψυχὰς Δαναῶν ὀλέσασ᾽
ἀξύστατον ἄλγος ἔπραξεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. β δαῖμον, ὃς ἐμπίτνεις δώμασι καὶ διφυί-
οισι Ταντα λίδαισιν,
κράτος τ᾽ ἰσόψυχον ἐκ γυναικῶν
καρδιόδηκτον ἐμοὶ κρατύνεις·
ἐπὶ δὲ σώματος δίκαν

1460 ἦ τις Schütz: ἥτις *f.*
1464 ἐκτρέψῃς G *z*: ἐκτρέχησ F.
1466 ὀλέσασ᾽ *z*: ὀλέσαν *f.*
1468 ἐμπίτνεις Canter: ἐμπίπτεις *f.*
1468–9 διφυίοισι Hermann, Ταντα λίδαισιν *z*: διφυεῖσι ταντα λίδεσιν *f.*
1470 τ᾽ Hermann: om. *f.*
1471 καρδιόδηκτον Abresch: καρδίᾳ δηκτὸν vel sim. *f.*
1472 δίκαν Dindorf: δίκαν μοι *f.*

through the shedding of blood that nothing can wash
away! Truly the house then[310] contained
a spirit that stirred up strife[311] and brought woe to the
man.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Do not, I beg, pray for the fate of death
because you are grieved by these events,
nor turn your anger against Helen,
calling her a destroyer of men, saying that she alone
brought death to so many souls of Danaan men
and caused pain too strong to stand.

CHORUS

Spirit that assails this house
and the two Tantalids so different in their nature,[312]
and controls it, in a way that rends my heart,
through the agency of women whose souls were alike![313]
Standing over the corpse,[314] in the manner

310 viz. when Helen dwelt there. 311 lit. "a stirring-up Strife": ἐρίδματος, which is found nowhere else, is probably a coinage based on the epic verb ἐριδμαίνειν "provoke" (used at *Iliad* 16.260 of boys provoking wasps to swarm from their nest). For the association between Helen and the spirit of Strife cf. 681–698.

312 Agamemnon and Menelaus (cf. 122). Tantalus, the father of Pelops, was their great-grandfather. 313 lit. "(with) an equal-souled control (arising) from women". The two brothers "so different in their nature" had for their wives two half-sisters whose "souls were alike" in one crucial respect—their adulterous lust—which in both cases led to disastrous consequences.

314 Since it is in fact Clytaemestra who is "standing over the corpse", a partial identification is being made here between her and the δαίμων: cf. 1497–1504.

κόρακος ἐχθροῦ σταθεὶς ἐκνόμως
ὕμνον ὑμνεῖν ἐπεύχεται ‹ ∪ –›.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

νῦν ὤρθωσας στόματος γνώμην,
τὸν τριπάχυντον
δαίμονα γέννης τῆσδε κικλήσκων·
ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ ἔρως αἱματολοιχὸς
†νείρει† τρέφεται· πρὶν καταλῆξαι
τὸ παλαιὸν ἄχος, νέος ἵχωρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. γ ἦ μέγαν †οἴκοις τοῖσδε†
δαίμονα καὶ βαρύμηνιν αἰνεῖς—
φεῦ φεῦ, κακὸν αἶνον—ἀτη-
ρᾶς τύχας ἀκόρεστον,
ἰὼ ἰή, διαὶ Διὸς

1473 ἐκνόμως Σ^{Tr} z: ἐννόμως *f*.

1474 lacuna posited by Pauw (cf. 1454): ‹δίκας› Keck: ‹πικρόν› Page: perh. e.g. ‹χαρᾶς›.

1475 νῦν Headlam: νῦν δ' *f*.

1476 τριπάχυντον Bamberger: τριπάχυιον *f*.

1479 νείρει *f*: νείρᾳ Wellauer (νείρῃ Portus): νεῖται· (τρέφεται, πρὶν . . .) West.

1481 οἴκοις τοῖσδε *f*: οἰκοσινῆ Wilamowitz.

1484 ἀκόρεστον Todt: ἀκορέστου *f*.

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315 When Greeks thought of unburied corpses being eaten by birds, the raven was the bird that came first to mind (as in the colloquial imprecation ἐς κόρακας "to hell with you!")

of a loathsome raven,[315] it glories
in tunelessly singing a song ‹of joy›.[316]

CLYTAEMESTRA

Now you are voicing a more correct opinion,
naming the thrice-fattened[317]
spirit of this family.
From it grows the ‹terrible› lust to lick blood:[318]
before the old wound is healed, there is fresh
suppuration.

CHORUS

Truly it is a great spirit of grievous wrath,
destructive to the house,[319] that you tell of—
ah, ah, an evil tale to tell!—
insatiable in its appetite for ruinous events—
ió, ié!—and all by the will of Zeus,

316 The missing word must have been in some way descriptive of the song the *daimon* sings, and my suggested supplement is meant to recall the manifest exultation to which the *daimon*'s representative or embodiment, Clytaemestra, gave expression in 1372–1447.

317 The food that fattens it is probably to be understood as blood (cf. 1188–9, *Cho.* 577–8). "Thrice" may here mean no more than "repeatedly" or even "very much", but in *Libation-Bearers* (*loc. cit.* and 1065–74) it refers literally to the successive murders (i) of the children of Thyestes, (ii) of Agamemnon, (iii) of Clytaemestra and Aegisthus.

318 It is quite uncertain what the corrupt *νείρει* conceals; some of the possible restorations require punctuation before, rather than after, *τρέφεται*.

319 I translate Wilamowitz's emendation of the (unmetrical) transmitted text.

παναιτίου πανεργέτα·
τί γὰρ βροτοῖς ἄνευ Διὸς τελεῖται;
τί τῶνδ' οὐ θεόκραντόν ἐστιν;

ἐφυμν. β ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ,
πῶς σε δακρύσω;
φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ' εἴπω;
κεῖσαι δ' ἀράχνης ἐν ὑφάσματι τῷδ'
ἀσεβεῖ θανάτῳ βίον ἐκπνέων,
ὤμοι μοι, κοίταν τάνδ' ἀνελεύθερον,
δολίῳ μόρῳ δαμεὶς <δάμαρτος>
ἐκ χερὸς ἀμφιτόμῳ βελέμνῳ.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

αὐχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοὔργον ἐμόν;
<μὴ > μηδ' ἐπιλεχθῇς
Ἀγαμεμνονίαν εἶναί μ' ἄλοχον·
φανταζόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ
τοῦδ' ὁ παλαιὸς δριμὺς ἀλάστωρ
Ἀτρέως χαλεποῦ θοινατῆρος
τόνδ' ἀπέτεισεν,
τέλεον νεαροῖς ἐπιθύσας.

1486 -εργέτα *z*: -εργάτα *t*: -εργέταν *f*.
1489/1513 ἰὼ ἰὼ *z t*: ἰὼ *f*.
1495/1519 <δάμαρτος> Enger: om. *f*.
1498 lacuna posited by Keck.

the Cause of all things, the Effector of all effects;
for what comes to pass for mortals, except by Zeus's
doing?
what of all this is not divinely ordained?

Ió, ió, my king, my king,
how shall I weep for you?
what is there I can say from my loyal heart?
Here you lie in this spider's web
after breathing your life out in an impious death—
ah me, ah me!—lying in a state unfit for a free man,
laid low in treacherous murder by the hand
‹of your wife› with a two-edged weapon.

CLYTAEMESTRA

You think this deed is mine?
‹Do not suppose so,› nor reckon
that I am the spouse of Agamemnon:[320]
no, the ancient, bitter avenging spirit
of Atreus, the furnisher of the cruel banquet,
has taken the likeness of this corpse's wife
and paid him out,
adding a full-grown sacrificial victim to the young ones.

320 Clytaemestra first criticizes the chorus for believing that she (i.e. Agamemnon's wife) is Agamemnon's murderer, and then tells them not to believe that she (i.e. Agamemnon's murderer) is Agamemnon's wife; this contradiction is doubtless deliberate on the poet's part, drawing attention (as the chorus will, more directly, in 1505–7) to the sheer incoherence of any attempt to deny her guilt.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. γ ὡς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἶ
τοῦδε φόνου τίς ὁ μαρτυρήσων;
πῶ πῶ; πατρόθεν δὲ συλλή-
πτωρ γένοιτ᾽ ἂν ἀλάστωρ·
βιάζεται δ᾽ ὁμοσπόροις
ἐπιρροαῖσιν αἱμάτων
μέλας Ἄρης, ὅποι δίκαν προβαίνων
πάχνᾳ κουροβόρῳ παρέξει.

ἐφυμν. β ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ,
πῶς σε δακρύσω;
φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ᾽ εἴπω;
κεῖσαι δ᾽ ἀράχνης ἐν ὑφάσματι τῷδ᾽
ἀσεβεῖ θανάτῳ βίον ἐκπνέων,
ὤμοι μοι, κοίταν τάνδ᾽ ἀνελεύθερον,
δολίῳ μόρῳ δαμεὶς <δάμαρτος>
ἐκ χερὸς ἀμφιτόμῳ βελέμνῳ.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οὔτ᾽ ἀνελεύθερον οἶμαι θάνατον
τῷδε γενέσθαι
< >·
οὐδὲ γὰρ οὗτος δολίαν ἄτην

1511 δίκαν (δίκην) Butler: δὲ καὶ *f.*
1522/3 lacuna posited by Wilamowitz: ‹δόλιόν τε λαχεῖν μόρον οὐκ ἀδίκως› e.g. West.

CHORUS

That you are not responsible
for this murder, who will testify?
How, how could it be? But an avenging spirit
from his father's crime might be your accomplice:
black Ares forces his way,
with further streams of kindred blood,
wherever he can advance to secure
justice for the clotted blood of boys made into a meal.

Ió, ió, my king, my king,
how shall I weep for you?
what is there I can say from my loyal heart?
Here you lie in this spider's web
after breathing your life out in an impious death—
ah me, ah me!—lying in a state unfit for a free man,
laid low in treacherous murder by the hand
‹of your wife› with a two-edged weapon.

CLYTAEMESTRA

I do not think this man had a death
unworthy of a free person,
‹and it was in accordance with justice that he died by
treachery;›[321]
for did *he* not also cause a calamity for this house

[321] The need for a supplement of approximately this sense is well shown by West, *Studies* 222–3.

οἴκοισιν ἔθηκ᾽;
ἀλλ᾽ ἐμὸν ἐκ τοῦδ᾽ ἔρνος ἀερθέν,
τὴν πολύκλαυτόν †τ᾽ Ἰφιγένειαν†
< >·
ἄξια δράσας, ἄξια πάσχων,
μηδὲν ἐν Ἅιδου μεγαλαυχείτω,
ξιφοδηλήτῳ
θανάτῳ τείσας ἅπερ ἔρξεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. δ ἀμηχανῶ φροντίδος στερηθεὶς
εὐπάλαμον μέριμναν
ὅπᾳ τράπωμαι πίτνοντος οἴκου.
δέδοικα δ᾽ ὄμβρου κτύπον δομοσφαλῆ
τὸν αἱματηρόν· ψακὰς δὲ λήγει,
Δίκᾳ δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἄλλο πρᾶγμα θηγάνει βλάβας
πρὸς ἄλλαις θηγάναισι Μοῖρα.

1526 πολύκλαυτόν τ᾽ Ἰφιγένειαν *f*: πολυκλαύτην Ἰφ. Porson (Ἰφ. del. Elmsley): lacuna posited by Wilamowitz, who suggested e.g. πολύκλαυτον <παῖδ᾽> Ἰφ. <ἔθυσε πατήρ>.

1527 ἄξια (δράσας) Hermann: ἀνάξια *f*.

1529 ἔρξεν Bourdelot: ἦρξεν *f*.

1531 εὐπάλαμον Hermann: εὐπάλαμνον *f*.

1535 θηγάνει Hermann, βλάβας (acc. pl.) Paley: θήγει βλάβης *f*.

through treachery?[322]
Why, the offspring that I conceived by him,
the much-bewailed Iphigeneia,
‹was sacrificed by her father›.[323]
He is suffering his deserts for an action that deserved
them:
let him utter no loud boasts in Hades,
after making a payment that matched his deed, death by
the stroke of the sword.

CHORUS

Robbed of the rich resources of thought,
I am at a loss for an idea
which way to turn, now the house is falling.
I foresee with fear the noise of a rainstorm that will
bring the house down
in blood: one shower is ending,
but Destiny is sharpening the sword of harm
on another set of whetstones, for Justice to do another
deed.[324]

[322] The reference must be to the story, which is as old as the *Cypria* (Arg. 8 West), that Iphigeneia was summoned to Aulis under the pretence that she was to be married to Achilles; a version of this story may well have been dramatized in Aeschylus' lost *Iphigeneia*, as other versions of it certainly were in Sophocles' *Iphigeneia* (cf. Sophocles fr. 305) and Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis*.

[323] I translate Wilamowitz's tentative restoration; but the gap may be longer than this, and there may have been a specific reference to the pretended marriage.

[324] For this image of Destiny making a sword for Justice, cf. *Choephori* 648–9.

ἐφυμν. γ ἰὼ γᾶ γᾶ, εἴθε μ᾽ ἐδέξω
πρὶν τόνδ᾽ ἐσιδεῖν ἀργυροτοίχου
δροίτης κατέχοντα χάμευναν.
τίς ὁ θάψων νιν; τίς ὁ θρηνήσων;
ἦ σὺ τόδ᾽ ἔρξαι τλήσῃ, κτείνασ᾽
ἄνδρα τὸν αὑτῆς ἀποκωκῦσαι
ψυχῇ τ᾽ ἄχαριν χάριν ἀντ᾽ ἔργων
μεγάλων ἀδίκως ἐπικρᾶναι;
τίς δ᾽ ἐπιτύμβιον αἶνον ἐπ᾽ ἀνδρὶ θείῳ
σὺν δακρύοις ἰάπτων
ἀληθείᾳ φρενῶν πονήσει;

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οὐ σὲ προσήκει τὸ μέλημ᾽ ἀλέγειν
τοῦτο· πρὸς ἡμῶν
κάππεσε, κάτθανε, καὶ καταθάψομεν,
οὐχ ὑπὸ κλαυθμῶν τῶν ἐξοίκων,
ἀλλ᾽ Ἰφιγένειά νιν ἀσπασίως
θυγάτηρ, ὡς χρή,
πατέρ᾽ ἀντιάσασα πρὸς ὠκύπορον
πόρθμευμ᾽ ἀχέων
περὶ χεῖρε βαλοῦσα φιλήσει.

1538 εἴθε μ᾽ *z*: εἴθ᾽ ἔμ᾽ *f*.
1545 ψυχῇ τ᾽ E. A. J. Ahrens: ψυχὴν *f*.
1547 ἐπιτύμβιον Weil, αἶνον Casaubon: ἐπιτύμβιος αἶνος *f*.
1551 μέλημ᾽ ἀλέγειν Karsten: μέλημα λέγειν *f*.
1554 ἐξοίκων Auratus: ἐξ οἴκων *f*.
1555 Ἰφιγένειά νιν Jacob: Ἰφιγένειαν· ἵν᾽ *f*.
1559 χεῖρε Porson, φιλήσει Jacob: χεῖρα . . . φιλήση *f*.

Ió, Earth, Earth, if only you had received me[325]
before I saw this man lying
in the lowly deathbed of a silver-sided bathtub!
Who will bury him? Who will sing his lament?
Will *you* dare to do it—after slaying
your own husband, to wail for him
and to perform, without right, a favour that will be no favour
to his soul, in return for his great deeds?
Who that utters praises over the tomb
of a godlike man, accompanied by tears,
will do that task with sincerity of heart?

CLYTAEMESTRA

It is not your business to trouble yourself
with that concern. At our hand
he fell, at our hand he died, and our hand will bury him,
not to the accompaniment of grieving by those outside the family—
no, his daughter Iphigeneia,
as is proper, will meet
and welcome her father
at the swift Ferry of Grief,[326]
throw her arms around him and kiss him!

325 Meaning either "if only I had been buried in you" or "if only you had swallowed me up".

326 Charon's ferry over the Acherusian Lake, whose name is here derived from ἄχεα "pains, griefs" (cf. Melanippides, *PMG* 759; Licymnius, *PMG* 770).

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. δ ὄνειδος ἥκει τόδ' ἀντ' ὀνείδους,
δύσμαχα δ' ἐστὶ κρῖναι.
φέρει φέροντ', ἐκτίνει δ' ὁ καίνων·
μίμνει δὲ μίμνοντος ἐν θρόνῳ Διὸς
παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα· θέσμιον γάρ.
τίς ἂν γονὰν ἀραῖον ἐκβάλοι δόμων;
κεκόλληται γένος πρὸς ἄτᾳ.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἐς τόνδ' ἐνέβης ξὺν ἀληθείᾳ
χρησμόν· ἐγὼ δ' οὖν
ἐθέλω δαίμονι τῷ Πλεισθενιδᾶν
ὅρκους θεμένη τάδε μὲν στέργειν
δύστλητά περ ὄνθ', ὃ δὲ λοιπόν, ἰόντ'
ἐκ τῶνδε δόμων ἄλλην γενεὰν
τρίβειν θανάτοις αὐθένταισιν.
κτεάνων δὲ μέρος βαιὸν ἔχουσῃ

1563 *θρόνῳ* Schütz: *χρόνω f.*
1565 *ἀραῖον* Hermann: *ῥᾷον* vel sim. *f.*
1566 *πρὸς ἄτᾳ* Blomfield: *προσάψαι f.*
1567 *ἐνέβης* Canter: *ἐνέβη f.*
1571 *δύστλητά* G *z*: *δύσπλητά* F.
1574 *δὲ* anon.: *τε f.*

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327 Pleisthenes is a shadowy name in the family to which Agamemnon belongs, found at several different points in its genealogy (see Gantz 552–6). Most often, Pleisthenes is a son of Atreus who dies young and whose children, Agamemnon and Menelaus,

CHORUS

Insult comes in return for insult,
and it is a hard struggle to judge.
The ravager is ravaged, the killer pays;
it remains firm while Zeus remains on his throne
that he who does shall suffer, for that is his ordinance.
Who can cast the seed of the curse out of the house?
The family is glued fast to ruin.

CLYTAEMESTRA

You have struck on this oracular saying
with truth; but be that as it may,
I am willing to make a sworn agreement
with the spirit of the Pleisthenids[327]
that I will be content with what has happened,
hard though it is to endure, but that for the future it
should leave
this house and vex some other family
with internecine killings.
Even if I am left with only a small part of our
possessions

are brought up by Atreus who comes to be regarded as their father. However, on the version of events that is assumed in this play, the curse or evil spirit originated not with this Pleisthenes but with Atreus (and Thyestes), and both this passage and 1602 will make most sense if "Pleisthenes" is assumed to be here merely an alternative name for Atreus himself (cf. the doubly named Paris/Alexander); such an equation will have been encouraged by the practice of some lyric poets (Ibycus, *PMG* 282; Bacchylides 15.6, 48) who speak of Agamemnon and/or Menelaus both as "Pleisthenids" and as "Atreids" or "sons of Atreus".

πᾶν ἀποχρῇ μοι, μανίας μελάθρων
ἀλληλοφόνους αφελούσῃ.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ὦ φέγγος εὖφρον ἡμέρας δικηφόρου.
φαίην ἂν ἤδη νῦν βροτῶν τιμαόρους
θεοὺς ἄνωθεν γῆς ἐποπτεύειν ἄχη,
ἰδὼν ὑφαντοῖς ἐν πάγαις Ἐρινύων
τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε κείμενον, φίλως ἐμοί,
χειρὸς πατρῴας ἐκτίνοντα μηχανάς.
Ἀτρεὺς γὰρ ἄρχων τῆσδε γῆς, τούτου πατήρ,
πατέρα Θυέστην τὸν ἐμόν, ὡς τορῶς φράσαι,
αὐτοῦ δ' ἀδελφόν, ἀμφίλεκτος ὢν κράτει,
ἠνδρηλάτησεν ἐκ πόλεως τε καὶ δόμων·
καὶ προστρόπαιος ἑστίας μολὼν πάλιν
τλήμων Θυέστης μοῖραν ηὗρετ' ἀσφαλῆ,
τὸ μὴ θανὼν πατρῷον αἱμάξαι πέδον
αὐτός· ξένια δὲ τοῦδε δύσθεος πατὴρ
Ἀτρεύς, προθύμως μᾶλλον ἢ φίλως πατρὶ
τῷμῷ, κρεουργὸν ἦμαρ εὐθύμως ἄγειν
δοκῶν, παρέσχε δαῖτα παιδείων κρεῶν.
τὰ μὲν ποδήρη καὶ χερῶν ἄκρους κτένας
< >

1575–6 μοι μανίας μελάθρων ἀλληλοφόνους Erfurdt: μοι δ' ἀλλ. μαν. μελ. *f.* 1580 πάγαις Nauck: πέπλοις *f.*
1585 δ' Elmsley: τ' *f.* 1590 αὐτός Blomfield: αὐτοῦ *f.*
1594/5 lacuna posited by Hermann: ‹κεφαλάς τε σώσας, τἀπίλοιπα τῶν κρεῶν› (cf. Herodotus 1.119) e.g. Rose.

anything is enough for me if I can remove
the madness of mutual slaughter from our house.

Enter AEGISTHUS, *from the wings, with a* CAPTAIN *and armed guards.*

AEGISTHUS

O gracious light of the day that brings me justice! Now at last I will say that there are gods above who look down upon the sorrows of earth and avenge mortal wrongs, now I have seen this man lying in the woven snare of the Furies—a sight precious to me—and paying for the deed his father's hand contrived. This man's father Atreus, you see, when he was ruling this land, being challenged for power by my father Thyestes, his own brother—to speak plainly[328]—expelled him from home and city. Later the unhappy Thyestes came back as a suppliant to his hearth and secured himself safety from death and from staining his ancestral soil with his own blood. But Atreus, this man's impious father, in an act of hospitality to my father that was more eager than it was friendly, pretending to be holding a cheerful day of butchery,[329] served him with a meal of his children's flesh. The foot parts and the combs at the ends of the arms,[330] ‹and the heads, he set aside; the rest of their

328 In fact, far from speaking "plainly", Aegisthus is suppressing all reference to an important relevant fact known to the audience—his father's adulterous relationship with the wife of Atreus (1193).

329 i.e. a sacrificial feast.

330 i.e. the palms and fingers.

ἔθρυπτ' ἄπωθεν ἀνδρακὰς καθημένων
ἄσημ'· ὁ δ' αὐτῶν αὐτίκ' ἀγνοίᾳ λαβὼν
ἔσθει, βορὰν ἄσωτον, ὡς ὁρᾷς, γένει·
κἄπειτ' ἐπιγνοὺς ἔργον οὐ καταίσιον
ᾤμωξεν, ἀμπίπτει δ' ἀπὸ σφαγὰς ἐρῶν,
μόρον δ' ἄφερτον Πελοπίδαις ἐπεύχεται,
λάκτισμα δείπνου ξυνδίκως τιθεὶς ἀρᾷ·
οὕτως ὀλέσθαι πᾶν τὸ Πλεισθένους γένος.
ἐκ τῶνδέ τοι πεσόντα τόνδ' ἰδεῖν πάρα·
κἀγὼ δίκαιος τοῦδε τοῦ φόνου ῥαφεύς.
τρίτον γὰρ ὄντα μ' ἔλιπε, κἀθλίῳ πατρὶ
συνεξελαύνει τυτθὸν ὄντ' ἐν σπαργάνοις·
τραφέντα δ' αὖθις ἡ Δίκη κατήγαγεν,
καὶ τοῦδε τἀνδρὸς ἡψάμην θυραῖος ὤν,
πᾶσαν ξυνάψας μηχανὴν δυσβουλίας.

1595 ἄπωθεν Fuhr, καθημένων Ludwig: ἄνωθεν . . . καθήμενος *f*.
1596 ἄσημ'· ὁ δ' Dindorf: ἄσημα δ' *f*.
1599 ἀμπίπτει Portus, Canter, σφαγὰς Voss: ἂν· πίπτει . . . σφαγῆς *f*. 1602 ὀλέσθαι *t*: ὀλέσθη *f*.
1603 τοι Hermann: σοι *f*.
1605 ἔλιπε, κἀθλίῳ Emperius: ἐπὶ δέκ' ἀθλίῳ *f*.

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331 This passage is badly corrupt. Key considerations in restoring and interpreting it are, firstly, that it cannot have been only the hands and feet that were "chopped up . . . so [as to be] unrecognizable"—hence something must have been lost between 1594 and 1595—and secondly, that Herodotus, in writing the parallel story of Astyages and Harpagus (1.119), appears to have had our passage in mind (note especially his phrase ἄκρων χειρῶν τε καὶ

flesh› he chopped up, well away from the diners who were sitting each by himself, so that it was unrecognizable;[331] and Thyestes at once, in ignorance, took some of it and ate it, a meal that, as you now see, was ruinous for the family. Then, when he recognized the unrighteous deed, he howled aloud, fell backwards while vomiting out the slaughtered remains, and called down an unendurable fate on the house of Pelops,[332] kicking over the table to chime with his curse: "So perish all the race of Pleisthenes!" It is because of this, you see, that you now behold this man fallen. And I was rightfully entitled to contrive this slaying. I was my wretched father's third child; Atreus spared me and drove me out together with him, when I was a tiny infant in swaddling clothes. When I grew up, Justice brought me back again, and I laid hands on this man though I was not present, fitting together every device to plan his

πoδῶν), so it is likely that here, as in Herodotus, mention was made of the children's heads, the display of which to their father would be the most unmistakable demonstration of what he had been tricked into doing. In the lacuna I translate Rose's tentative supplement, which gives approximately the sense required. That the diners were sitting "each by himself" is mentioned to explain how it was possible for the children's flesh to be served to Thyestes alone.

332 This does not give the wording of Thyestes' curse (that is given in 1602) but is Aegisthus' comment on it: as the new heads of the royal house, he and Clytaemestra officially take the (of course hypocritical) view that the curse and its consequences, including the death of Agamemnon, however gratifying to themselves, have been disastrous to the interests of the family as a whole (cf. 1570–6, 1655–6, 1659–60, *Cho.* 841–3).

οὕτω καλὸν δὴ καὶ τὸ κατθανεῖν ἐμοί,
ἰδόντα τοῦτον τῆς Δίκης ἐν ἕρκεσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Αἴγισθ', ὑβρίζειν ἐν κακοῖσιν οὐ σέβω·
σὺ δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε φὴς ἑκὼν κατακτανεῖν,
μόνος δ' ἔποικτον τόνδε βουλεῦσαι φόνον.
οὔ φημ' ἀλύξειν ἐν δίκῃ τὸ σὸν κάρα
δημορριφεῖς, σάφ' ἴσθι, λευσίμους ἀράς.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

σὺ ταῦτα φωνεῖς, νερτέρᾳ προσήμενος
κώπῃ, κρατούντων τῶν ἐπὶ ζυγῷ δορός;
γνώσῃ γέρων ὢν ὡς διδάσκεσθαι βαρὺ
τῷ τηλικούτῳ, σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον.
δεσμὸν δὲ καὶ τὸ γῆρας αἵ τε νήστιδες
δύαι διδάσκειν ἐξοχώταται φρενῶν
ἰατρομάντεις. οὐχ ὁρᾷς ὁρῶν τάδε;
πρὸς κέντρα μὴ λάκτιζε, μὴ παίσας μογῇς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γύναι, σὺ τοὺς ἥκοντας ἐκ μάχης νέον

1613 *τόνδε φὴς* Pauw: *τόνδ' ἔφης f.*
1624 *παίσας t*: *πήσας f.*

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333 There is irony in *πᾶσαν . . . μηχανὴν δυσβουλίας*, since it could also mean "every ill-counselled device".

334 Here, and again at 1627 and 1634–5, the chorus distinguish between Aegisthus who "planned" the murder and Clytaemestra who actually performed it. In Athenian law, when a wilful homicide had been committed, its planner was as guilty of murder as its perpetrator (cf. 1613 "you intentionally killed this

harm.[333] So, truly, even death would be fine for me now, having seen this man in the toils of Justice.

CHORUS

Aegisthus, I am not in the habit of being insolent at a time of trouble; but you say that you intentionally killed this man, and that you alone planned[334] this piteous murder? I say that you will not escape getting what you deserve—curses flung at your head like stones by the people.[335]

AEGISTHUS

You talk like that, you sitting down there at the oar, when it is those on the poop-deck who command the ship? You'll learn, old as you are, that education is tough for someone of your age who's been ordered to behave himself. Even in old age, imprisonment and the pangs of hunger are most excellent medicine-men[336] to instruct the mind. You have eyes, and yet you don't see that? Don't kick against the goad, in case you hit it and get hurt.

CHORUS

You woman! You, the stay-at-home, did this to those who

man") and was liable to the same penalty (cf. Andocides 1.94); see E. M. Harris in E. Cantarella and G. Thür ed. *Symposion 1997* (Cologne, 2001) 75–88 = Harris, *Democracy and the Rule of Law in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 2006) 391–404.

335 lit. "that your head will not escape stoning-like curses, know it well, flung by the people, in justice". In view of Aegisthus' armed guard, they cannot now seriously suppose (contrast 1430) that the people will be able to put him or Clytaemestra to death, by stoning or otherwise; they can stone him, as it were, only with words—but this they are willing to do, at whatever risk, just as at 1652 they are ready to fight with walking-sticks against swords.

336 lit. "healer-seers".

οἰκουρός, εὐνὴν ἀνδρὸς αἰσχύνων ἅμα,
ἀνδρὶ στρατηγῷ τόνδ' ἐβούλευσας μόρον;

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

καὶ ταῦτα τἄπη κλαυμάτων ἀρχηγενῆ.
Ὀρφεῖ δὲ γλῶσσαν τὴν ἐναντίαν ἔχεις·
ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἦγε πάντ' ἀπὸ φθογγῆς χαρᾷ,
σὺ δ' ἐξορίνας νηπίοις ὑλάγμασιν
ἄξῃ· κρατηθεὶς δ' ἡμερώτερος φανῇ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὡς δὴ σύ μοι τύραννος Ἀργείων ἔσῃ,
ὃς οὐκ, ἐπειδὴ τῷδ' ἐβούλευσας μόρον,
δρᾶσαι τόδ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔτλης αὐτοκτόνως.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

τὸ γὰρ δολῶσαι πρὸς γυναικὸς ἦν σαφῶς,
ἐγὼ δ' ὕποπτος ἐχθρὸς ἦ παλαιγενής.
ἐκ τῶν δὲ τοῦδε χρημάτων πειράσομαι
ἄρχειν πολιτῶν· τὸν δὲ μὴ πειθάνορα
ζεύξω βαρείαις, οὔ τι μὴ σειραφόρον
κριθῶντα πῶλον, ἀλλ' ὁ δυσφιλὴς σκότῳ
λιμὸς ξύνοικος μαλθακόν σφ' ἐπόψεται.

1626 *αἰσχύνων* Keck: *αἰσχύνουσ' f.*
1631 *νηπίοις* Auratus: *ἠπίοις f.*
1634 *τῷδ' ἐβούλευσας* (*ἐβουλεύσας*) *z*: *τῷδε βουλεύσας f.*
1638 *τῶν δὲ* Casaubon: *τῶνδε f.*
1641 *σκότῳ* Scaliger: *κότῳ f.*

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337 Cf. Simonides, *PMG* 567: "Over his [Orpheus'] head flew numberless birds, and fish leaped straight up from the dark-blue water at his beautiful song" (tr. D. A. Campbell).

had just returned from battle—at the same time as you were defiling the man's bed, you planned to kill the commander of the host like this?

AEGISTHUS

Those words, too, will be a cause for generating cries of pain! You have a tongue that's just the opposite of Orpheus. He *led on* all nature with the joy his voice engendered,[337] whereas if you anger me with your childish barkings you'll be *led off* under arrest—and once under control, you'll show yourself a bit tamer!

CHORUS

As though I'll let you be tyrant of the Argives—you who, when you'd planned the death of this man, didn't have the courage to do the deed with your own hands!

AEGISTHUS

Well, the entrapment was obviously a job for a woman,[338] and I was an old enemy and likely to be suspected. With the help of this man's wealth I shall try to rule over the citizens. Anyone who will not obey his master I will yoke with heavy straps—he certainly won't be a young trace-horse high on barley;[339] no, hateful Hunger, with its housemate Darkness, will see him soften!

338 Because women were supposed to have great and sinister skills in deception; cf. (among many other passages) *Odyssey* 11.456; Hesiod, *Works and Days* 67, 373–5; Euripides, *Medea* 421–2.

339 The trace-horses in a racing team (see note on 842), which had to be capable of sudden acceleration or retardation when rounding the turning-post, were evidently given extra food for this reason.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δὴ τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδ' ἀπὸ ψυχῆς κακῆς
οὐκ αὐτὸς ἠνάριζες, ἀλλὰ σὺν γυνή,
χώρας μίασμα καὶ θεῶν ἐγχωρίων,
ἔκτειν'; Ὀρέστης ἆρά που βλέπει φάος,
ὅπως κατελθὼν δεῦρο πρευμενεῖ τύχῃ
ἀμφοῖν γένηται τοῖνδε παγκρατὴς φονεύς;

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ δοκεῖς τάδ' ἔρδειν καὶ λέγειν, γνώσῃ
τάχα.
εἶα δή, φίλοι λοχῖται, τοὔργον οὐχ ἑκὰς τόδε.

ΛΟΧΑΓΟΣ

εἶα δή, ξίφος πρόκωπον πᾶς τις εὐτρεπιζέτω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλὰ κἀγὼ μὴν πρόκωπος, κοὐκ ἀναίνομαι θανεῖν.

1652 *πρόκωπος* G^{pc}: *πρόκοπος* F G^{ac}: *πρόκοπτος* z.
1652 *κοὐκ* Fraenkel: *οὐκ f.*

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340 From here to the end the text is in trochaic tetrameters, which were chanted to musical accompaniment.

341 Verrall's creation of this additional speaking character, and Thomson's assignment of 1651 to him (Verrall had given him 1650), are essential. Neither 1650 nor 1651 can be spoken by the chorus-leader: λοχῖται (1650) is Aeschylus' designation for Aegisthus' bodyguard (*Cho.* 768), and the members of the chorus,

CHORUS

Why were you so cowardly as not to slay this man yourself? Why did a woman have to join in the murder, polluting this land and the gods who dwell in it? Does Orestes still somewhere look on the light of day, so that with fortune's favour he may come back here and be the triumphant killer of both these two?

AEGISTHUS[340]

Well, since you think fit to act and speak like this, you will soon know the consequences. Ho there, my friends of the guard, your duty is close at hand here!

CAPTAIN[341]

Ho there, everyone, hold swords at the ready, hilt forward![342] [*The guards obey this order.*]

CHORUS

Well, I too am at the ready, and I do not refuse to die! [*They raise their staffs with a view to defending themselves.*]

who even ten years ago were too old for military service, certainly do not wear swords (ξίφος 1651). Thus 1650 must be spoken by Aegisthus; and since it is pointless for him to give two successive orders, only the second of which has any effect, the natural inference is that he first gives an inexplicit but easily understood order to the captain who then gives a precise, drill-like instruction to his men. Another character in the trilogy who has only one line to speak is the Doorkeeper (*Cho.* 657).

342 The sword is to be held horizontally, ready for drawing, but not yet actually drawn.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

δεχομένοις λέγεις θανεῖν γε· τὴν τύχην δ'
αἱρούμεθα.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

μηδαμῶς, ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, ἀλλὰ δράσωμεν κακά·
ἀλλὰ καὶ τάδ' ἐξαμῆσαι πολλά, δύστηνον θέρος.
πημονῆς δ' ἄλις γ' ὑπάρχει· μηδὲν αἱματώμεθα.
στείχετ', αἰδοῖοι γέροντες, πρὸς δόμους,
†πεπρωμένους τούσδε†
πρὶν παθεῖν †ἔρξαντες καιρὸν† χρὴ τάδ' ὡς
ἐπράξαμεν.
εἰ δέ τοι μόχθων γένοιτο τῶνδ' ἄκος, δεχοίμεθ' ἄν,
δαίμονος χηλῇ βαρείᾳ δυστυχῶς πεπληγμένοι.
ὧδ' ἔχει λόγος γυναικός, εἴ τις ἀξιοῖ μαθεῖν.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἀλλὰ τούσδ' ἐμοὶ ματαίαν γλῶσσαν ὧδ'
†ἀπανθίσαι†

1653 γε Lobel: σε *f*. 1653 αἱρούμεθα Auratus: ἐρούμεθα *f*. 1654 δράσωμεν Victorius: δράσομεν *f*.
1655 θέρος Schütz: ὁ ἔρως *f*. 1656 ὑπάρχει Scaliger, αἱματώμεθα anon.: ὕπαρχε . . . ἡματώμεθα *f*.
1657 στείχετ' αἰδοῖοι H. L. Ahrens: στείχετε δ' οἱ *f*.
1657 πεπρωμένους τούσδε *f*: πεπρωμένοις (and εἴξαντες in 1658) Madvig: ‹κρεῖσσον φρονεῖν› e.g. Fraenkel.
1658 ἔρξαντες *f*: ἔρξαντα *z*: εἴξαντες Madvig (cf. on 1657).
1658 καιρόν *f*: ἀρκεῖν Hermann. 1658 χρὴ Hartung, ἐπράξαμεν Victorius: χρὴν (χρῆν *t*) . . . ἐπραξάμην *f*.
1659 ἄκος Donaldson, δεχοίμεθ' Martin: ἄλις γ' εχοίμεθ' *f*.
1662 τουσδ' ἐμοὶ Portus: τούσδε μοι *f*.
1662 ἀπανθίσαι *f*: ἀκοντίσαι Wakefield.

AEGISTHUS

We accept the omen of "to die",[343] and we opt for that outcome!

CLYTAEMESTRA [*coming forward to intervene*][344]

Dearest of men, please let us not do further harm. What we have is enough to have reaped, a terrible harvest. There is sufficient grief already: let us not get blood on our hands.[345] Go now, honourable elders, to your homes, ‹yielding to fate› before you suffer. These things must ‹be accepted› as we have done them.[346] If, I tell you, a cure for these troubles were to appear, we would accept it, after having been so wretchedly struck by the heavy talon of the evil spirit. Such are the words of a woman, if anyone sees fit to learn from them.

AEGISTHUS

But to think that these men should ‹shoot off›[347] their

343 lit. "you say 'to die' to those who accept it".

344 The *ekkyklēma* was probably withdrawn during the confrontation between Aegisthus and the chorus (Clytaemestra having stepped off it, then or earlier); note that there are no more references to Agamemnon as "this man", such as had occurred regularly until 1644, suggesting that his corpse is no longer visible.

345 Of course they have blood on their hands already; but Clytaemestra does not regard the killing of Agamemnon as a crime (cf. 1405–6), whereas, even in her view, the massacre of the Elders *would* be.

346 The emendations of Madvig and Hermann, which I translate here, are far from certain; the transmitted reading ἔρξαντες, giving the sense "before you suffer for what you have done", has the ring of authenticity (cf. 1564) but makes it even harder to restore the rest of the text.

347 I translate Blomfield's conjecture, but only as a stopgap; the transmitted text gives the absurd meaning "pluck like a flower".

κἀκβαλεῖν ἔπη τοιαῦτα δαίμονος πειρωμένους,
σώφρονος γνώμης δ' ἁμαρτῇ τὸν κρατοῦντα < >.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν Ἀργείων τόδ' εἴη, φῶτα προσσαίνειν κακόν.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐγώ σ' ἐν ὑστέραισιν ἡμέραις μέτειμ' ἔτι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὔκ, ἐὰν δαίμων γ' Ὀρέστην δεῦρ' ἀπευθύνῃ μολεῖν.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

οἶδ' ἐγὼ φεύγοντας ἄνδρας ἐλπίδας σιτουμένους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρᾶσσε, πιαίνου, μιαίνων τὴν δίκην, ἐπεὶ πάρα.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἴσθι μοι δώσων ἄποινα τῆσδε μωρίας χάριν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κόμπασον θαρσῶν, ἀλέκτωρ ὥστε θηλείας πέλας.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

μὴ προτιμήσῃς ματαίων τῶνδ' ὑλαγμάτων· <ἐγὼ>
καὶ σὺ θήσομεν κρατοῦντε δωμάτων <καλῶς τάδε>.

1663 δαίμονος Portus: δαίμονας *f*.
1664 ἁμαρτῇ τὸν West: ἁμαρτῆτον *f*: ἁμαρτεῖν τὸν Casaubon.
1664 <λοιδορεῖν> Scaliger: <θ' ὑβρίσαι> Blomfield: (κρατοῦντ') <ὀνειδίσαι> Lindau.
1667 γ' Headlam: om. *f*.
1671 ὥστε Canter: ὥσπερ *f*.
1672 ἐγὼ Σ^{Tr}: om. *f*.

worthless tongues, throw out words like that chancing their luck, and ‹revile› their ruler with a complete lack of decent thinking!

CHORUS

It would not be the Argive way to fawn on a wicked man.

AEGISTHUS

Well, I will still be going after you in days to come.

CHORUS

Not if god guides Orestes to come back here.

AEGISTHUS

I know that men in exile nourish their hopes!

CHORUS

Carry on—fatten yourself—defile justice, while you can!

AEGISTHUS

I tell you you will pay me a penalty for this foolish behaviour!

CHORUS

Brag away confidently, like a cock standing next to his hen!

CLYTAEMESTRA

Don't take any notice of these empty barkings. You and I, controlling the house, will set all this in order.

CLYTAEMESTRA leads AEGISTHUS into the palace; the CHORUS depart in one direction, and the guards in the other.

1673 δωμάτων Fraenkel (who transposed it to an earlier point in the line), καλῶς Auratus, τάδε Sommerstein: cf. Σ^{Tr} διαθησόμεθα τὰ καθ' αὑτοὺς καλῶς: τῶνδε δωμάτων *f*.

LIBATION-BEARERS

ΧΟΗΦΟΡΟΙ

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΓΡΑΩΝ ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΩΝ
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
ΘΥΡΩΡΟΣ
ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ
ΚΙΛΙΣΣΑ, *τροφὸς Ὀρέστου*
ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
ΟΙΚΕΤΗΣ

LIBATION-BEARERS

Characters of the Play

ORESTES, *son of Agamemnon*
PYLADES, *his foster-brother, son of Strophius the Phocian*
CHORUS *of elderly serving-women of the palace*
ELECTRA, *Orestes' sister*
DOORKEEPER *of the palace*
CLYTAEMESTRA
CILISSA, *formerly Orestes' nurse*
AEGISTHUS
A SERVANT

Scene: At first, at the tomb of Agamemnon, close to his former palace, now the residence of Clytaemestra and Aegisthus; later the tomb gradually ceases to be noticed and the action is centred on the palace.

Enter ORESTES *and* PYLADES, *dressed as travellers.* ORESTES *approaches his father's tomb (represented by the central altar-mound), holding in his hand a lock of his hair.*

The first part of the prologue has been lost from the only manuscript (whose surviving text begins at the moment when Orestes first sees a group of women approaching),

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Ἑρμῆ χθόνιε, πατρῷ' ἐποπτεύων κράτη,
σωτὴρ γενοῦ μοι σύμμαχός τ' αἰτουμένῳ·
ἧκω γὰρ εἰς γῆν τήνδε καὶ κατέρχομαι
<

× – > βιαίως ἐκ γυναικείας χερὸς
δόλοις λαθραίοις <– ∪ –> ἀπώλετο.
<

>
τύμβου δ' ἐπ' ὄχθῳ τῷδε κηρύσσω πατρὶ
κλυεῖν, ἀκοῦσαι <

× – ∪ > πλόκαμον Ἰνάχῳ θρεπτήριον·

1–3 Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1126–8 = 1138 + 1152–3

3a-b Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1141–3 (ὁ πατὴρ ἀπώλετο αὐτοῦ βιαίως ἐκ γυναικείας χερὸς δόλοις λαθραίοις); placed here, and sequenced as above, by West (following Thiersch and Hermann)

3b ‹δυσκλεῶς τ'› suppl. West

4–5 Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1172–3

6–7 Scholia to Pindar, *Pythian* 4.145 ("said by Orestes to Agamemnon"); ascribed to *Cho.* by Stanley

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[1] On the reconstruction of this part of the prologue, see M. L. West, *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 10 (1985) 130–1, and M. Griffith, *AJP* 108 (1987) 377–382.

[2] Either the power which Agamemnon's angry spirit can exercise from the underworld over events on earth, or the royal power which his son hopes to regain, or (very likely) both. "Aeschylus" in *Frogs* 1144–6 explains the phrase as referring not to Orestes' fa-

but several lines of it are quoted by other authors. The reconstruction offered below (with supplements indicated by angled brackets) is not intended to do more than indicate what appears to have been the gist of the passage so far as it can be determined; some sections may well have disappeared without trace.[1]

ORESTES

Hermes of the Underworld, you who watch over my father's power,[2] be, I pray you, my saviour and my ally! I have come to this land and returned ‹from long exile to take revenge for my father, who› perished violently ‹and ignobly› at the hand of a woman by concealed treachery. ‹. . .[3]› And on this his grave-mound I make proclamation to my father to hearken and hear me ‹and to aid me. I have already offered› a lock of hair to Inachus[4] in recompense

ther but to Hermes' own father (Zeus), but this interpretation may be merely meant to provide a feed for a joke by Dionysus (1147–9).

[3] Here Orestes, like Electra in 124–8, may have asked Hermes, in his role as communicator between the upper and nether worlds, to bid the gods below respond favourably to his prayers.

[4] The river(-god) of Argos (cf. *Supp.* 497, *Prom.* 590, 663, 705). Similarly Achilles was growing a lock of his hair with the intention of cutting it on his return home and offering it to his local river(-god) Spercheius (*Iliad* 23.140–9); knowing he will never return home, he presents it instead to his dead comrade Patroclus. The dedication of hair to a river as a nurture-offering survived as a regular ritual at Phigaleia in Arcadia (Pausanias 8.41.3). For the cutting of hair in mourning ritual cf. *Odyssey* 4.197–8, 24.45–46 (both passages couple it with the shedding of tears) and Plato, *Phaedo* 89b.

τὸν δεύτερον δὲ τόνδε πενθητήριον
<
>
οὐ γὰρ παρὼν ᾤμωξα σόν, πάτερ, μόρον,
οὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ' ἐπ' ἐκφορᾷ νεκροῦ.
<ἔα·>
τί χρῆμα λεύσσω; τίς ποθ' ἥδ' ὁμήγυρις
στείχει γυναικῶν φάρεσιν μελαγχίμοις
πρέπουσα; ποίᾳ ξυμφορᾷ προσεικάσω;
πότερα δόμοισι πῆμα προσκυρεῖ νέον,
ἢ πατρὶ τῷμῷ τάσδ' ἐπεικάσας τύχω
χοὰς φερούσας, νερτέροις μειλίγματα;
οὐδέν ποτ' ἄλλο· καὶ γὰρ Ἠλέκτραν δοκῶ
στείχειν ἀδελφὴν τὴν ἐμὴν πένθει λυγρῷ
πρέπουσαν. ὦ Ζεῦ, δός με τείσασθαι μόρον
πατρός, γενοῦ δὲ σύμμαχος θέλων ἐμοί.
Πυλάδη, σταθῶμεν ἐκποδών, ὡς ἂν σαφῶς
μάθω γυναικῶν ἥτις ἥδε προστροπή.

8–9 Scholia to Euripides, *Alcestis* 768 (cited from *Cho.*); restored to text by Dindorf
8 παρὼν ᾤμωξα Dindorf: παρώμωξα schol. Eur.
after 9 there may or may not be some lines missing.
9a <ἔα·> added by Dindorf. 10 M begins here.
15 μειλίγματα Casaubon: μειλίγμασιν M.

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[5] This gesture of mourning (mentioned also by Euripides, *Alcestis* 768 and *Suppliants* 772) is shown in many artistic images; see J. H. Oakley, *Picturing Death in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 2004) 76–77 ("valediction").

[6] It is possible that there followed here a passage, now lost, in

for my nurture, and ‹I now offer here› this second lock as a mourning-tribute ‹to you› [*placing the lock on the tomb*]; for I was not present to grieve for your death, father, or to stretch out my hand[5] when your body was carried from the house.[6]

A procession of serving-women (the CHORUS*) begins to emerge from the palace door.*[7] *They are elderly, and are dressed all in black; there are rents in their clothes and gashes on their cheeks. Two of them carry jars on their heads.*

‹Hey,› what is this I see? What may this gathering of women be that comes here, so striking in their black garments? What event shall I guess that it betokens? Has some new disaster befallen the house, or will I be right in conjecturing that these women are bringing drink-offerings for my father to propitiate the powers below? [*ELECTRA comes out of the door, a little after the others, also carrying a jar.*] It can be nothing else, because I think I see my sister Electra coming with them, striking in her bitter grief. Zeus, grant that I may avenge the death of my father, and may it be your will to be my ally! Pylades, let us stand out of the way, so that I can learn for sure what this women's supplication is about. [*ORESTES and PYLADES conceal themselves.*]

which Orestes prayed for the assistance of his father's spirit in his task of taking revenge (cf. 128–148, 456–460, 479–509); but it is also possible that the appearance of the women's procession interrupted him before he could do so.

7 That the chorus in this play enter from the *skēnē*, rather than by a side-passage as usual, is well argued by S. Scullion, *Three Studies in Athenian Dramaturgy* (Stuttgart, 1994) 71–74.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α ἰαλτὸς ἐκ δόμων ἔβαν
χοὰς προπομπὸς ὀξύχειρι σὺν κόπῳ·
πρέπει παρῆς φοίνισσ' ἀμυγμοῖς ὄνυχος ἄλοκι
νεοτόμῳ—
διὰ αἰῶνος δ' ἰυγ-
μοῖσι βόσκεται κέαρ—
λινοφθόροι δ' ὑφασμάτων
λακίδες ἔφλαδον ὑπ' ἄλγεσιν,
πρόστερνοι στολμοὶ πέπλων ἀγελάστοις
ξυμφοραῖς πεπληγμένοι.

ἀντ. α τορὸς γὰρ ὀρθόθριξ δόμων
ὀνειρόμαντις, ἐξ ὕπνου κότον πνέων,
ἀωρόνυκτον ἀμβόαμα μυχόθεν ἔλακε περὶ φόβῳ,
γυναικείοισιν ἐν
δώμασιν βαρὺς πίτνων·
κριταὶ δὲ τῶνδ' ὀνειράτων
θεόθεν ἔλακον ὑπέγγυοι
μέμφεσθαι τοὺς γᾶς νέρθεν περιθύμως
τοῖς κτανοῦσί τ' ἐγκοτεῖν.

23 *κόπῳ* Casaubon, cf. Σ^{M} *ὅπως . . . κόψωμαι*: *κύπτωι* M.
26 δ' *ἰυγμοῖσι* Canter: διοιγμοῖσι M.
30 *πρόστερνοι* Turnebus: *πρόσστερνοι* M^{s} (*πρὸς τοῖς στέρνοις* Σ^{M}): *πρόστελνοι* M.
31 *πεπληγμένοι* Wilamowitz: *πεπληγμένων* M.
32 *γὰρ* Blass: *γὰρ φοῖβος* M: *φόβος* Σ^{M}.
35 ἔλακε M^{s}, cf. Σ^{M} *ἀναλακεῖν . . . ἐποίησεν*: ἔλαχε M.

CHORUS

I have come from the house, having been sent
to escort the drink-offerings with rapid beating of
hands;[8]
my cheek stands out red with gashes,
with furrows freshly cut by my nails
(though all my life my heart
has fed on cries of woe);
the tearing sound of garments rent in grief
has ruined their linen weave[9]—
the folds of my robes over my breast, savaged
by mirthless disaster.

A clear prophetic dream, breathing out wrath in sleep,
which made the house's hair stand on end,
raised a loud cry of terror at dead of night in the
innermost part of the house,
making a heavy attack
on the women's quarters;
and the interpreters of this dream
proclaimed, under a divine guarantee,[10]
that those beneath the earth were furiously aggrieved
and wrathful against the killers.

[8] On head or breast or both, as a gesture of mourning (like the gashing of cheeks and rending of garments mentioned below).

[9] lit. "linen-ruining tearings of woven garments have resounded due to grief".

[10] i.e. under oath (to give an honest interpretation).

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38 δὲ Portus: om. M.
39 ἔλακον Turnebus: ἔλαχον M.

στρ. β τοιάνδε χάριν ἀχάριτον, ἀπότροπον κακῶν,
ἰὼ Γαῖα μαῖα, μωμένα μ' ἰάλλει
δύσθεος γυνά. φοβοῦ-
μαι δ' ἔπος τόδ' ἐκβαλεῖν·
τί γὰρ λύτρον πεσόντος αἵματος πέδῳ;
ἰὼ πάνοιζυς ἑστία,
ἰὼ κατασκαφαὶ δόμων·
ἀνήλιοι βροτοστυγεῖς
δνόφοι καλύπτουσι δόμους
δεσποτᾶν θανάτοισι.

ἀντ. β σέβας δ' ἄμαχον ἀδάματον ἀπόλεμον τὸ πρὶν
δι' ὥτων φρενός τε δαμίας περαῖνον
νῦν ἀφίσταται, φοβεῖ-
ται δέ τις. τὸ δ' εὐτυχεῖν,

42 ἀχάριτον Elmsley: ἄχαριν M. 45 μ' ἰάλλει *m*: μιλλεῖ M. 47 ἐκβαλεῖν Jacob: ἐκβάλλειν M Σ^{M}.
48 λυτρὸν Canter: λυγρὸν M.
54 ἀδάματον Hermann: ἀδάμαντον M.
56 φρενός Victorius: φρένες M.

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11 The "favour" that Clytaemestra is ostensibly bestowing on the spirit of Agamemnon is "graceless" because her sole motive is not to benefit him but to protect herself.

12 Earth, as the oldest and greatest of chthonic powers, is likely to be offended by the abuse of chthonic rites to which the chorus are being forced to be party.

13 The view taken here is that this refers to the next sentence: if it is true that bloodshed can never be expiated, then the chorus are risking divine wrath and punishment by performing a ritual

Such is the graceless favour[11] to avert trouble—
O Mother Earth![12]—that she is seeking to do by sending
me,
that godless woman. This is a word
that I am afraid to utter:[13]
what expiation is there when blood has been shed on the
ground?
O hearth full of woe!
O ruin of the house!
Sunless darkness, abhorred by all,
shrouds the house
because its rulers have perished.[14]

The reverence—once unconquerable, invincible,
impregnable—
that penetrated the ears and hearts of the people
is now departing; someone
is afraid.[15] Good fortune,

whose purpose is to expiate it. Others take the reference to be to the prayers that will accompany the ritual, or to the words "godless woman" (in the latter case the sentence "This is a word that I am afraid to utter" would be parenthetical).

[14] The reference is primarily to the death of Agamemnon, but (i) this was a sequel to other deaths in the family (cf. 1065–72) and (ii) it was the end (unless Orestes were eventually to return) of the legitimate royal house of Argos.

[15] It is not clear (and it is not clear whether the poet meant it to be clear) whether this is a guarded way of saying that the usurping rulers are afraid of the people, or whether it means that the people are now in terror of (instead of revering) their rulers (in which case the translation would be "men are afraid"). For a similar ambiguity cf. *Eum.* 690–2.

τόδ' ἐν βροτοῖς θεός τε καὶ θεοῦ πλέον·
ῥοπὰ δ' ἐπισκοπεῖ Δίκας
ταχεῖα τοὺς μὲν ἐν φάει,
τὰ δ' ἐν μεταιχμίῳ σκότου
μένει χρονίζοντα βρύειν,
τοὺς δ' ἄκρατος ἔχει νύξ.

στρ. γ τὰ δ' αἵματ' ἐκποθένθ' ὑπὸ Χθονὸς τροφοῦ
τίτας φόνος πέπηγεν οὐ διαρρύδαν·
αἰανὴς ἄτα
διαφέρει τὸν αἴτιον
καὶ παναρκέτας νόσος.

ἀντ. γ θιγόντι δ' οὔτι νυμφικῶν ἑδωλίων
ἄκος, πόροι τε πάντες ἐκ μιᾶς ὁδοῦ
φοιβαίνοντες τὸν

61 Δίκας (δίκης) Σ^{M}: δίκαν M.
62 τοὺς Σ^{M}: τοῖς M.
64 χρονίζοντα βρύειν Todt (βρύειν Jacob, ἄχει del. Schütz): χρονίζοντ' ἄχει (ἄχη M^{s}) βρύει M.
65 ἄκρατος Schütz: ἄκραντος M.
66 τὰ δ' Bamberger: δι' (gloss, cf. Σ^{M} διὰ τὰ αἵματα) M.
66 ἐκποθένθ' Schütz: ἔκποθεν M.
68 αἰανὴς H. L. Ahrens, cf. Σ^{M} διαιωνίζουσα: διαλγὴς M.
70 καὶ παναρκέτας νόσος West: παναρκέτας νόσου M ^{i}Σ^{M}.
after 70 M adds βρύειν· τοὺς δ' ἄκραντος ἔχει νύξ (cf. 64–65): τοὺς . . . νὺξ del. Portus, βρύειν del. Hermann.
71 θιγόντι Stephanus: οἴγοντι M.
73 φοιβαίνοντες Tucker, χερομυσῆ Porson: βαίνοντες . . . χαιρομυσῆ M.

that is a god, and more than a god, among mortals;
but Justice with her scales watches over them,[16]
against some acting swiftly in the daylight,
while other things wait, to burgeon after long delay
in the no-man's-land between light and darkness,
and others again are held in pitch-black night.[17]

Blood when it is drunk up by the nurturing earth
congeals as vengeful gore that cannot dissolve away:
the guilty one is torn apart
by unending calamity
and sickness that lasts and lasts.

For him who violates the bower of maidenhood
there is no remedy, and likewise if all the streams come
by one way
to purify

[16] On the first of the two interpretations given in the previous note, the point being made is: our rulers "worship" Fortune, thinking that if their luck holds they will be safe, and shut their eyes to the certainty that Justice will sooner or later catch up with them.

[17] The general point is evidently "justice is sometimes slow but always sure"; the most obvious (but far from certain) interpretation of the details, taking light and darkness as representing life and death, is that some are punished quickly, some late in life, some only after death (cf. *Eum.* 175–8, 267–275, 339–340, *Seven* 742–5, *Supp.* 413–6).

χερομυσῆ φόνον †καθαί-
ροντες† ἴθυσαν μάταν.

ἐπῳδ. ἐμοὶ δ' (ἀνάγκαν γὰρ ἀμφίπτολιν
θεοὶ προσήνεγκαν· ἐκ γὰρ οἴκων πατρῴων
δούλιον ἐσᾶγον αἶσαν)
δίκαια καὶ μὴ δίκαι' ἀρχὰς πρέπον
βίᾳ φρενῶν αἰνέσαι,
πικρὸν στύγος κρατούσᾳ·
δακρύω δ' ὑφ' εἱμάτων
ματαίοισι δεσποτᾶν
τύχαις, κρυφαίοις πένθεσιν παχνουμένα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δμῳαὶ γυναῖκες, δωμάτων εὐθήμονες,
ἐπεὶ πάρεστε τῆσδε προστροπῆς ἐμοὶ
πομποί, γένεσθε τῶνδε σύμβουλοι πέρι·

73–74 καθαίροντες (gloss on φοιβαίνοντες) M: perh. ‹ῥυτοῖς ὕδασιν› vel sim., cf. *Eum.* 452.

74 ἴθυσαν Musgrave, μάταν (μάτην) Scaliger: ἰοῦσαν ἄτην M (ἄταν M^s) $^1\Sigma^M$.

78 ἀρχὰς πρέπον Wilamowitz: πρέποντ' ἀρχὰς M $^\lambda\Sigma^M$.

79 βίᾳ K. O. Müller: βίου βίαι M Σ^M.

79 φρενῶν H. L. Ahrens: φερομένων M Σ^M.

80 πικρὸν Σ^M: πικρῶν M.

80 στύγος H. L. Ahrens: φρενῶν στύγος M Σ^M.

83 παχνουμένα (-νη) Turnebus: παχνουμένην M.

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18 lit. "a hand-polluting murder". 19 I translate my very tentative supplement (replacing the intrusive gloss καθαίροντες)

a hand stained by murder[18] ‹with their flowing
waters›,[19] they strive in vain.

For me, since the gods brought compulsion
around my city[20]—they took me from my father's house
into a life of slavery—
it is proper to approve what my rulers do,
be it right or wrong,[21] regardless of my own thoughts,
mastering my bitter loathing;
but chilled by hidden grief
I weep beneath my garments[22]
for the senseless sufferings of my masters.

ELECTRA

Servant women who keep the house in good order, since you are here to escort me in this act of supplication, please be my counsellors in this matter: what should I say as I

purely for the sake of continuity. A reference to water would certainly help to ease the difficulty noted by K. Sier, *Die lyrischen Partien der Choephoren des Aischylos* (Stuttgart, 1988) 44, that πόρος is not normally used to mean "stream" unless words in the context make it clear that this is its sense.

[20] i.e. caused it to be besieged and captured by an enemy army (presumably Argive or Argive-led). It is left vague when and where this occurred; it cannot have been in the recent Trojan War, since the women are old (171) and yet were taken "from [their] father[s'] house[s]", i.e. while still unmarried.

[21] The scholia quote a proverb, "Slave, obey your masters in right things and in wrong". In Sophocles' *Antigone* (666–7) Creon misapplies this maxim to claim that the *citizen* owes an absolute duty of obedience to state authority.

[22] i.e. covering my face (both as a mourning gesture and to conceal the tears).

τί φῶ χέουσα τάσδε κηδείους χοάς;
πῶς εὔφρον' εἴπω; πῶς κατεύξομαι πατρί;
πότερα λέγουσα παρὰ φίλης φίλῳ φέρειν
γυναικὸς ἀνδρί, τῆς γ' ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάρα;
ἢ τοῦτο φάσκω τοὔπος, ὡς νόμος βροτοῖς,
ἔσθλ' ἀντιδοῦναι τοῖσι πέμπουσιν τάδε
στέφη, δόσιν γε τῶν κακῶν ἐπαξίαν;
ἢ σῖγ' ἀτίμως, ὥσπερ οὖν ἀπώλετο
πατήρ, τάδ' ἐκχέασα, γάποτον χύσιν,
στείχω, καθάρμαθ' ὥς τις ἐκπέμψας, πάλιν
δικοῦσα τεῦχος ἀστρόφοισιν ὄμμασιν;
τῶνδ' οὐ πάρεστι θάρσος, οὐδ' ἔχω τί φῶ
χέουσα τόνδε πελανὸν ἐν τύμβῳ πατρός.
τῆσδ' ἔστε βουλῆς, ὦ φίλαι, μεταίτιαι·
κοινὸν γάρ ἔχθος ἐν δόμοις νομίζομεν.
μὴ κεύθετ' ἔνδον καρδίας φόβῳ τινός·
τὸ μόρσιμον γὰρ τόν τ' ἐλεύθερον μένει
καὶ τὸν πρὸς ἄλλης δεσποτούμενον χερός.
λέγοις ἄν, εἴ τι τῶνδ' ἔχεις ὑπέρτερον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰδουμένη σοι βωμὸν ὣς τύμβον πατρὸς
λέξω, κελεύεις γάρ, τὸν ἐκ φρενὸς λόγον.

87 *τί φῶ* H. L. Ahrens: *τύφω* (*τύμβῳ* M^{s}) δὲ M.
90 *τῆς γ'* West: *τῆς* M.
91–92 transposed by Diggle to follow 99.
94 *ἔσθλ'* Elmsley: *ἔστ'* M. 95 *γε* Bourdelot: *τε* M.
97 *ἐκχέασα* Dindorf: *ἐκχέουσα* M.
105 *ἔχεις* Askew: *ἔχοις* M.

pour these drink-offerings of mourning? How can I speak sensibly? How will I pray to my father? Should I say that I am bringing them from a loving wife to a dear husband—when they come from my mother? Or should I say it this way, as is the custom among mankind, that he should repay with blessings those who sent him these honours—[*sarcastically*] truly the repayment their crimes deserve? Or should I pour them out in silence—a mark of dishonour, just as my father perished dishonourably—for the earth to drink up, and go, like someone getting rid of the vessel used in a purification ritual,[23] throwing the jar away behind me without turning my eyes? I don't have the courage for that,[24] and I can't think what to say when I pour this thick-flowing offering at my father's tomb. Please, my friends, share the responsibility for this decision; for we cherish the same enmity within our home. Don't hide your thoughts within your heart for fear of anyone: the same fate lies in store for the free man as for him who is enslaved to the hand of another. Please speak, if you have any better ideas than what I have said.

CHORUS

I respect your father's tomb as if it were an altar, and as you bid me, I will speak my mind out.

[23] "This refers to an Athenian custom: when they purified a house with an earthenware censer, they threw the pot away at a crossroads and withdrew without looking back" (scholia).

[24] Not so much because it would anger Clytaemestra in the unlikely event of her getting to know about it, as because it might anger Agamemnon if he misunderstood Electra's contempt for the offerings as contempt for himself.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λέγοις ἄν, ὥσπερ ᾐδέσω τάφον πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φθέγγου χέουσα κεδνὰ τοῖσιν εὔφροσιν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίνας δὲ τούτους τῶν φίλων προσεννέπω;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὴν χὤστις Αἴγισθον στυγεῖ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐμοί τε καὶ σοί τἄρ᾽ ἐπεύξομαι τάδε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αὐτὴ σὺ ταῦτα μανθάνουσ᾽ ἤδη φράσαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίν᾽ οὖν ἔτ᾽ ἄλλον τῇδε προστιθῶ στάσει;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μέμνησ᾽ Ὀρέστου, κεἰ θυραῖός ἔσθ᾽ ὅμως.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εὖ τοῦτό γ᾽ ἐφρένωσας οὐχ ἥκιστά με.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῖς αἰτίοις νυν τοῦ φόνου μεμνημένη—

109 κεδνὰ Hartung (cf. Σ^{M} ἀγαθά): σεμνὰ M.
116 τοῦτό γ᾽ ἐφρένωσας Blaydes: τοῦτο κἀφρένωσας M.

ELECTRA

Do so, then, just as you have shown respect for my father's burial place.

CHORUS

As you pour, speak good words for those who are friendly.

ELECTRA

And which of those close to me should I designate in that way?

CHORUS

In the first place yourself, and everyone who hates Aegisthus.

ELECTRA

In that case, don't you see, I'll be making this prayer for me and for you, is that right?

CHORUS

Consider that for yourself; you already know the answer.

ELECTRA

Well, who else should I also add to this group?

CHORUS

Mention Orestes—even if he's abroad, mention him all the same.

ELECTRA

That's far from the least of the good advice you've given me.

CHORUS

Then mention those guilty of the murder, and against them—

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί φῶ; δίδασκ᾽ ἄπειρον ἐξηγουμένη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐλθεῖν τιν᾽ αὐτοῖς δαίμον᾽ ἢ βροτῶν τινα—

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

120 πότερα δικαστὴν ἢ δικηφόρον λέγεις;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἁπλωστὶ φράζουσ᾽, ὅστις ἀνταποκτενεῖ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ ταῦτά μοὔστιν εὐσεβῆ θεῶν πάρα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

123 πῶς δ᾽ οὔ, τὸν ἐχθρόν γ᾽ ἀνταμείβεσθαι κακοῖς;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

165 κῆρυξ μέγιστε τῶν ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω,
124 <×–∪> Ἑρμῆ χθόνιε, κηρύξας ἐμοὶ
125 τοὺς γῆς τ᾽ ἔνερθε δαίμονας κλυεῖν ἐμὰς
εὐχάς, πατρῴων δωμάτων ἐπισκόπους,
καὶ Γαῖαν αὐτήν, ἣ τὰ πάντα τίκτεται
θρέψασά τ᾽ αὖθις τῶνδε κῦμα λαμβάνει.
κἀγὼ χέουσα τάσδε χέρνιβας νεκροῖς
130 λέγω καλοῦσα πατέρ᾽· ἐποίκτιρόν τ᾽ ἐμὲ

123 ἐχθρόν γ᾽ West: ἐχθρὸν M.
165 transposed by Hermann to follow 123.
165 μέγιστε Portus: μεγίστη M.
124 <ἄρηξον> Klausen. 125 γῆς τ᾽ West: γῆς M.
126 δωμάτων Portus: δ᾽ ὀμμάτων M.

ELECTRA

What should I say? Explain and instruct me; I have no experience.

CHORUS

Ask for some god, or some mortal, to come against them—

ELECTRA

Do you mean a judge, or an avenger?

CHORUS

Say simply: one who will take life for life.

ELECTRA

And is this a righteous thing for me to ask of the gods?

CHORUS

How could it not be—to return your enemy evil for evil?

ELECTRA [*standing before the tomb*]

Great Herald who communicates between those above and those below, Hermes of the Underworld, <aid me> by making proclamation on my behalf both to the powers under the earth, who watch over my father's house, that they should hear my prayers, and to Earth herself, who gives birth to all things, nurtures them, and then receives that fruit of her womb back into herself. And I, as I pour these lustral libations,[25] call on my father and say: Have pity on

[25] χέρνιβες, normally water poured over the hands before a sacrifice or other ritual (as at *Ag.* 1037, *Eum.* 656), seems here to denote the drink-offerings; cf. Sophocles, *Electra* 84, 434, where the same offerings are called λουτρά.

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129 νεκροῖς γρMs: βροτοῖς M: φθιτοῖς Hermann.
130 πατέρ' (πάτερ') Ald.: πάτερ M.

φίλον τ' Ὀρέστην φῶς ἄναψον ἐν δόμοις.
πεπραμένοι γὰρ νῦν γέ πως ἀλώμεθα
πρὸς τῆς τεκούσης, ἄνδρα δ' ἀντηλλάξατο
Αἴγισθον, ὅσπερ σοῦ φόνου μεταίτιος.
κἀγὼ μὲν ἀντίδουλος, ἐκ δὲ χρημάτων
φεύγων Ὀρέστης ἐστίν, οἱ δ' ὑπερκόπως
ἐν τοῖσι σοῖς πόνοισι χλίουσιν μέγα.
ἐλθεῖν δ' Ὀρέστην δεῦρο σὺν τύχῃ τινὶ
κατεύχομαί σοι, καὶ σὺ κλῦθί μου, πάτερ·
αὐτῇ τέ μοι δὸς σωφρονεστέραν πολὺ
μητρὸς γενέσθαι χεῖρά τ' εὐσεβεστέραν.
ἡμῖν μὲν εὐχὰς τάσδε, τοῖς δ' ἐναντίοις
λέγω φανῆναι σοῦ, πάτερ, τιμάορον,
καὶ τοὺς κτανόντας ἀντικατθανεῖν δίκῃ·
ταῦτ' ἐν μέσῳ τίθημι τῆς κεδνῆς ἀρᾶς,
κείνοις λέγουσα τήνδε τὴν κακὴν ἀράν·
ἡμῖν δὲ πομπὸς ἴσθι τῶν ἐσθλῶν ἄνω
σὺν θεοῖσι καὶ Γῇ καὶ Δίκῃ νικηφόρῳ.
τοιαῖσδ' ἐπ' εὐχαῖς τάσδ' ἐπισπένδω χοάς·
ὑμᾶς δὲ κωκυτοῖς ἐπανθίζειν νόμος,
παιῶνα τοῦ θανόντος ἐξαυδωμένας.

131 φῶς ἄναψον ἔν Schneidewin (φῶς τ' ἄν.), Wilamowitz: πῶς ἀνάξομεν M ⁱΣᴹ.
132 πεπραμένοι Portus: πεπραγμένοι M.
136 φεύγων Robortello, Turnebus: φεύγειν M.
137 μέγα Turnebus: μέτα M.
140 σωφρονεστέραν Mˢ: σωφρονεστέρα M.
144 δίκῃ Portus: δίκην M. 145 κεδνῆς Butler: κακῆς M.

me, and kindle a light in your house in the shape of my beloved Orestes. For at present we are virtually vagrants, sold by our mother, who has received in exchange a new man—Aegisthus, the same who shared the guilt of your murder. I am in the position of a slave,[26] Orestes is in exile, deprived of his property, and they are greatly and extravagantly luxuriating in the wealth for which you toiled. I pray to you—and do hear me, father—for Orestes to come here by some stroke of fortune; and for myself, grant that I may be far more virtuous than my mother, and more righteous in action. These prayers for us. Upon our enemies I ask for there to appear an avenger for you, father, and for the killers to meet justice and perish in their turn—I place this in the middle of my prayer for good, uttering this prayer for evil against them; but for us, be a sender of blessings from below, together with the gods, and Earth, and Justice to bring us victory. Such are the prayers I make before pouring these drink-offerings; [*to the* CHORUS] the custom is for you to adorn them with wailing, uttering a paean to the deceased.[27] [*She pours out the offerings on the ground from the three jars in succession, while the* CHORUS *sing.*]

[26] Meaning primarily that, though she must by now be well into her twenties, she has still not been given in marriage (cf. 487) as any free daughter of a family routinely would be in her mid-teens.

[27] An oxymoron, like the "paean to the Furies" at Ag. 645, but not quite such a "blasphemous paradox" as that, since the ceremony, as reshaped by Electra and the chorus, is now designed to secure the victory of Agamemnon's heirs and the restoration of his honour, to which a paean would be appropriate.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴετε δάκρυ καναχὲς
ὀλομένῳ δεσπότᾳ
πρὸς ἔρυμα τόδε κεδνῶν, κακῶν δ'
ἀπότροπον ἄγος ἀπεύχετον,
κεχυμένων χοᾶν.
κλύε δέ μοι, σέβας, κλύ', ὦ δέσποτ', ἐξ
ἀμαυρᾶς φρενός.
ὀτοτοτοτοτοῖ·
ἰώ, τίς δορισθενὴς εἶσ' ἀνὴρ
ἀναλυτὴρ δόμων, Σκυθικά τ' ἐν χεροῖν
ἐν ἔργῳ βέλη πιπάλλων Ἄρεως
σχέδιά τ' αὐτόκωπα νωμῶν ξίφη;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔχει μὲν ἤδη γαπότους χοὰς πατήρ·
νέου δὲ μύθου τοῦδε κοινωνήσατε.

152 καναχὲς Blomfield: καναχὲς ὀλόμενον M.
154 κεδνῶν κακῶν Schütz, δ' Butler: κακῶν κεδνῶν τ' M.
155 ἄγος Σ[M]: ἄλγος M: ἄκος Sier (perh. then ἀπευχέτων [Butler]?)
157 σέβας κλυ' ὦ Bamberger: κλῦε· σεβάσω M.
159 ὀτοτοτοτοτοῖ (a dochmiac) Seidler: ὀτοτοτοτοτοτοῖ M. 160 δορισθενὴς anon.: δορυσθενὴς M.
160 εἶσ' ἀνὴρ Weil: ἀνὴρ M.
161 Σκυθικά Robortello: Σκυθιτά M: (Σκύθ)ησ M[sscr].
162 ἐν ἔργῳ Paley: παλίντον' ἐν ἔργῳ M: perh. ἐπ' ἔργῳ?
162 Ἄρεως Blaydes: Ἄρης M.
163 ξίφη (explicitly contrasted with βέλη) Σ[M]: βέλη M.
164 γαπότους Turnebus: ἀπό,του M (ἀ in an erasure).

CHORUS

Let the tears fall loudly
for our departed master
at this stronghold of the good, which averts
the abominable pollution of the wicked,[28]
now the drink-offerings have been poured.
Hear, I pray you, revered one! Hear, my master,
in the gloominess of your heart!
Ototototototoi!
Oh, if only there would come a man,[29] mighty with the spear,
to set the house free again, brandishing in his hands
Scythian weapons[30] in[31] the work of war
and wielding a sword,[32] of one piece with its hilt, for close fighting!

ELECTRA

Now my father has the drink-offerings—the earth has swallowed them; but here is something new about which I want to share a word with you.[33]

28 Or (reading ἄκος ἀπευχέτων) "at this stronghold of good, this averter and healer of abominable evil"; in either case it is the tomb, as the place at which Agamemnon's spirit can be invoked, that is being spoken of.

29 lit. "what man will come . . . ?"

30 i.e. bow and arrows (cf. *Prom.* 709–711, Sophocles fr. 427, Agathon fr. 4.3).

31 Or (reading ἐπ') "for".

32 For the plural ξίφη used of a single weapon, cf. Sophocles, *Ajax* 231.

33 lit. "but (please) share this new word".

ΧΟΡΟΣ

λέγοις ἄν· ὀρχεῖται δὲ καρδία φόβῳ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁρῶ τομαῖον τόνδε βόστρυχον τάφῳ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

169 τίνος ποτ' ἀνδρὸς ἢ βαθυζώνου κόρης;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

172 οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις πλὴν ἐμοῦ κείραιτό νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐχθροὶ γὰρ οἷς προσῆκε πενθῆσαι τριχί.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ὅδ' ἐστὶ κάρτ' ἰδεῖν ὁμόπτερος—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

175 ποίαις ἐθείραις; τοῦτο γὰρ θέλω μαθεῖν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

170 εὐξύμβολον τόδ' ἐστὶ παντὶ δοξάσαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

171 πῶς οὖν παλαιὰ παρὰ νεωτέρας μάθω;

167 ἄν· ὀρχεῖται Turnebus: ἀνορχεῖται M.
170–1 transposed by West to follow 175.

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[34] This incidentally tells us that we are to assume that Electra is Agamemnon's only surviving daughter; her sister Chrysothemis, who appears in at least one earlier vase-painting showing the death of Aegisthus (see Prag 15–16) and possibly in several others, perhaps reflecting a sixth-century poetic account (by Simonides?

CHORUS

Speak on; my heart is leaping with fear.

ELECTRA [*pointing to the lock left by* ORESTES]

I see this cut lock of hair on the tomb.

CHORUS

From what man, or what slim-waisted maiden?

ELECTRA

There is nobody who could have cut it except myself.[34]

CHORUS

Yes, those who ought to have mourned him with hair-offerings are his enemies.[35]

ELECTRA [*picking up the lock*]

And another thing—this looks very similar—

CHORUS

To whose hair? That's what I want to know.

ELECTRA

That's easy for anyone to guess and form an opinion.

CHORUS

So how can I, old as I am, learn from someone younger?

ELECTRA [*holding the lock up next to her own head*]

It greatly resembles my own.

see J. R. March, *The Creative Poet* [London, 1987] 92–95), will not be part of Aeschylus' version of the story. Sophocles brought her back into it—and made *her* find the lock at the tomb, and say to Electra, "To whom does it belong, except for *you and me*?" (*Electra* 909).

[35] Despite the plural, the description fits no one but Clytaemestra.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αὐτοῖσιν ἡμῖν κάρτα προσφερὴς ἰδεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μῶν οὖν Ὀρέστου κρύβδα δῶρον ἦν τόδε;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μάλιστ' ἐκείνου βοστρύχοις προσείδεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ἐκεῖνος δεῦρ' ἐτόλμησεν μολεῖν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔπεμψε χαίτην κουρίμην χάριν πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐχ ἧσσον εὐδάκρυτά μοι λέγεις τάδε,
εἰ τῆσδε χώρας μήποτε ψαύσει ποδί.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κἀμοὶ προσέστη καρδίᾳ κλυδώνιον
χολῆς, ἐπαίθην δ' ὡς διανταίῳ βέλει,
ἐξ ὀμμάτων δὲ δίψιοι πίπτουσί μοι
σταγόνες ἄφαρκτοι δυσχίμου πλημυρίδος
πλόκαμον ἰδούσῃ τόνδε· πῶς γὰρ ἐλπίσω
ἀστῶν τιν' ἄλλον τῆσδε δεσπόζειν φόβης;
ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μήν νιν ἡ κτανοῦσ' ἐκείρατο,
ἐμή γε μήτηρ, οὐδαμῶς ἐπώνυμον

172 κείραιτό Turnebus: κείρετό M. 177 ἦν Scholefield: ἦ M. 180 χαίτην Victorius: καὶ τὴν M.
182 ψαύσει Turnebus: ψαυδει M: (ψαυδ)ηι M^{s}.
183 καρδίᾳ anon.: καρδίας M. 190 γε Bourdelot: δὲ M.

CHORUS

You don't mean this was a secret gift from Orestes?

ELECTRA

It looks very much like his locks.

CHORUS

And how could he have dared to come here?

ELECTRA

He *sent* this cut lock, to honour his father.

CHORUS

What you say is no less amply deserving of my tears, if his foot is never going to touch the soil of this land.

ELECTRA

My heart, too, is assailed by a surge of bile;[36] I am stricken as if transfixed by a weapon; from my eyes there fall, without restraint, thirsty drops[37] of a stormy flood, when I look on this lock. How can I believe that anyone else among the citizens is the owner of this hair? And certainly it wasn't his killer who cut it off, either—my mother, who has an

[36] i.e. "I am terribly afraid"; see note on *Ag.* 1121–4.

[37] Two sensitive interpretations of this seemingly odd phrase are offered by the scholia: (i) the tears are "thirsty" because they are tears of longing (cf. Euripides, *Phoenician Maidens* 1737); (ii) they are falling from eyes that have long been dry (cf. *Ag.* 887–8)—though in the latter case we should perhaps say that the epithet has been transferred from the eyes to the tears. Both ideas may be simultaneously present.

φρόνημα παισὶ δύσθεον πεπαμένη.
ἐγὼ δ' ὅπως μὲν ἄντικρυς τάδ' αἰνέσω,
εἶναι τόδ' ἀγλαΐσμά μοι τοῦ φιλτάτου
βροτῶν Ὀρέστου—σαίνομαι δ' ὑπ' ἐλπίδος.
φεῦ·
εἴθ' εἶχε φωνὴν ἔμφρον' ἀγγέλου δίκην,
ὅπως δίφροντις οὖσα μὴ 'κινυσσόμην,
ἀλλ' εὖ σάφ' ἤδη τόνδ' ἀποπτύσαι πλόκον,
εἴπερ γ' ἀπ' ἐχθροῦ κρατὸς ἦν τετμημένος,
ἢ ξυγγενὴς ὢν εἶχε συμπενθεῖν ἐμοί,
ἄγαλμα τύμβου τοῦδε καὶ τιμὴν πατρός.
ἀλλ' εἰδότας μὲν τοὺς θεοὺς καλούμεθα,
οἵοισιν ἐν χειμῶσι ναυτίλων δίκην
στροβούμεθ'· εἰ δὲ χρὴ τυχεῖν σωτηρίας,
σμικροῦ γένοιτ' ἂν σπέρματος μέγας πυθμήν.
καὶ μὴν στίβοι γε, δεύτερον τεκμήριον,
ποδῶν, ὅμοιοι τοῖς τ' ἐμοῖσιν ἐμφερεῖς.
καὶ γὰρ δύ' ἐστὸν τώδε περιγραφὰ ποδοῖν,
αὐτοῦ τ' ἐκείνου καὶ συνεμπόρου τινός·
< >
πτέρναι τενόντων θ' ὑπογραφαὶ μετρούμεναι

195 ἔμφρον' Auratus: εὔφρον' M.
196 'κινυσσόμην Turnebus: 'κηνυσσόμην M.
197 σάφ' ἤδη Porson: σαφηνῆ M.
202 δίκην Ald.: δίκῃ M (ηι in an erasure) Σ^{M}.
206 ποδῶν ὅμοιοι Turnebus: ποδῶν (ποδ in an erasure) δόμοιοι (δ' ὁμοῖοι M^{s}) M.
after 208 lacuna posited by Hermann.

impious spirit towards her children that belies the name of mother. But for me to accept this outright, that I think this adornment comes from the person I most love in the world, Orestes—oh, hope is flattering me! Ah, if only it had a mind and a voice like a messenger, so that I wouldn't be tossed about in two minds, but would know for sure that I should reject this lock, if it really was cut from the head of an enemy, or else, if it was my kin, it would be able to join in my mourning, giving glory to this tomb and honour to my father! [*Stretching out her arms to heaven*] We appeal to the gods, who know what kind of storms are whirling our ship around[38]—though if we are destined to find safety, a great tree-trunk can spring from a tiny seed. [*About to return the lock to its place, when her eyes fall on something that excites her enormously*] And look, a second piece of evidence—footprints, resembling and similar to my own! Actually there are outlines of *two* pairs of feet here, his own and those of some fellow-traveller—<for while one set doesn't match mine, the other's> heels and the marks of his tendons,[39] when I measure them,[40] correspond precisely

38 lit. "by what kind of storms we, like sailors, are being whirled around".

39 The tendons of the foot do not leave prints; the reference is probably to "the folds of skin between the toes and the ball, which sometimes have the appearance of tendons" (Garvie).

40 Evidently by eye. The "precise correspondence" will be one of proportion, not of absolute dimensions—a point, deliberately ignored by Euripides (*Electra* 535–7) in his reworking of the recognition, which will have been obvious to any spectator who had ever looked at his own sister's feet.

εἰς ταὐτὸ συμβαίνουσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς στίβοις.
πάρεστι δ' ὠδὶς καὶ φρενῶν καταφθορά.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὔχου τὰ λοιπά, τοῖς θεοῖς τελεσφόρους
εὐχὰς ἐπαγγέλλουσα, τυγχάνειν καλῶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐπεὶ τί νῦν ἔκατι δαιμόνων κυρῶ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰς ὄψιν ἥκεις ὥπερ ἐξηύχου πάλαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ τίνα σύνοισθά μοι καλουμένῃ βροτῶν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σύνοιδ' Ὀρέστην πολλά σ' ἐκπαγλουμένην.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ πρὸς τί δῆτα τυγχάνω κατευγμάτων;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὅδ' εἰμί· μὴ μάστευ' ἐμοῦ μᾶλλον φίλον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' ἦ δόλον τιν', ὦ ξέν', ἀμφί μοι πλέκεις;

215 ὥπερ Quincey: ὥνπερ M.
215 ἐξηύχου Robortello, Turnebus: ἐξήυκου M.
217 ἐκπαγλουμένην ^{i}ΣM: ἐκπαγλουμένης M.

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41 It was common in prayers to draw the god's attention to benefits which (s)he had previously conferred on the worshipper, with the implication that consistency required the god to grant the present prayer likewise (*da quia dedisti*).

to my own footprints. [*She follows the prints away from the tomb until she comes to* ORESTES' *hiding-place; then she looks up from the ground and sees the face of—a young man unknown to her.*] Agony and mental breakdown are close to me!

ORESTES

Pray to the gods for continued success, proclaiming to them that your previous prayers have been fulfilled![41]

ELECTRA

Why, what success have the gods now granted me?

ORESTES

You have come face to face with the one you have long prayed for.

ELECTRA

And what person, pray, are you aware that I was calling for?

ORESTES

I'm aware that you were very much extolling Orestes.

ELECTRA

And in what way, may I ask, have I now gained what I prayed for?

ORESTES

I am he. Don't try to find one that's more your friend than I am.

ELECTRA

Look here, sir,[42] are you trying to weave some web of trickery around me?

[42] lit. "stranger".

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αὐτὸς κατ᾽ αὐτοῦ τἄρα μηχανορραφῶ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ᾽ ἐν κακοῖσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς γελᾶν θέλεις;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κἀν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἄρ᾽, εἴπερ ἔν γε τοῖσι σοῖς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὡς ὄντ᾽ Ὀρέστην †τάδ᾽ ἐγώ σε προυννέπω†;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

225 αὐτὸν μὲν οὖν ὁρῶσα δυσμαθεῖς ἐμέ·
226 κουρὰν δ᾽ ἰδοῦσα τήνδε κηδείου τριχὸς
228 ἰχνοσκοποῦσά τ᾽ ἐν στίβοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς
227 ἀνεπτερώθης κἀδοκεῖς ὁρᾶν ἐμέ.
230 σκέψαι τομῇ προσθεῖσα βόστρυχον τριχὸς
229 σαυτῆς ἀδελφοῦ σύμμετρον τῷ σῷ κάρᾳ.
231 ἰδοῦ δ᾽ ὕφασμα τοῦτο, σῆς ἔργον χερός,

224 τάδ᾽ ἐγώ σε προυννέπω M: τἄρ᾽ ἐγώ σε προυννέπω Bamberger: τάδε σ᾽ (γάρ σ᾽ Hermann, σ᾽ ἄρ᾽ Hartung) ἐγὼ προσεννέπω Auratus. 225 οὖν *m*: νὺν M.

227–8 transposed by Pauw. 229–230 transposed by Bothe. 230 τομῇ Turnebus: τὸ μὴ M.

229 σύμμετρον Pauw: συμμέτρου M $^{i}\Sigma^{M}$.

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43 The text is in detail uncertain, but there can be little doubt that Aeschylus wrote προσεννέπω "address", not προυννέπω "proclaim"; Electra knows that Argos is a dangerous place for Orestes to be (cf. 179–180), and the last thing she would want to do is proclaim publicly his presence there.

ORESTES [*laughing*]
If I am, then I must be hatching plots against myself!

ELECTRA
What, will you laugh at my sufferings?

ORESTES
If I'm laughing at yours, then I'm also laughing at my own.

ELECTRA [*hesitantly*]
You mean—should I be addressing you as Orestes?[43]

ORESTES
So when you see me in person you're reluctant to recognize me—whereas when you saw this cut lock of mourning [*picking the lock up from the tomb*], and when you were examining the tracks of my feet, your heart took wing and you imagined you could see me. [*Handing the lock to* ELECTRA, *and slinging his travelling hat behind his neck*[44]] Put the lock of hair next to the place it was cut from, and take a look: it's your own brother's, and it matches that of your own head. And look at this piece of weaving,[45] the work of

44 For the business with the hat, Garvie well adduces a slightly later Melian relief in Berlin (TI 6803; see Prag 53–54 and pl. 35b) in which Orestes' hat is thus placed while Pylades still has his on his head.

45 Evidently a garment, or part of a garment, that Orestes is wearing. In Euripides (*Electra* 538–544) Orestes' old servant speaks in terms appropriate to a whole garment, and Electra points out that this is absurd, since such a garment, made when Orestes was an infant, would be far too small for him to wear as an adult; but Aeschylus' language is at least as consistent with the idea that the "piece of weaving" is merely a cloth, woven and embroidered long ago by Electra, which has since been worked into, or sewn on to, the garment Orestes is now wearing.

σπάθης τε πληγὰς ἠδὲ θήρειον γραφήν.
ἔνδον γενοῦ, χαρᾷ δὲ μὴ 'κπλαγῇς φρένας·
τοὺς φιλτάτους γὰρ οἶδα νῷν ὄντας πικρούς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατον μέλημα δώμασιν πατρός,
δακρυτὸς ἐλπὶς σπέρματος σωτηρίου·
ὦ τερπνὸν ὄμμα, τέσσαρας μοίρας ἔχον
ἐμοί· προσαυδᾶν δ' ἔστ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχον
πατέρα τε, καὶ τὸ μητρὸς εἰς σέ μοι ῥέπει
στέργηθρον—ἡ δὲ παυδίκως ἐχθαίρεται—
καὶ τῆς τυθείσης νηλεῶς ὁμοσπόρου·
πιστὸς δ' ἀδελφὸς ἦσθ', ἐμοὶ σέβας φέρων
μόνος. <
ἀλκῇ πεποιθὼς δῶμ' ἀνακτήσῃ πατρός.
<μόνον> Κράτος τε καὶ Δίκη σὺν τῷ τρίτῳ
πάντων μεγίστῳ Ζηνὶ συγγένοιτό σοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, θεωρὸς τῶνδε πραγμάτων γενοῦ·

232 ἠδὲ Turnebus, *θήρειον* Bamberger: *εἰσδὲ θηρίον* M.
233 *μὴ 'κπλαγῇς* Turnebus: *μὴκπλαγιῇ* M.
237 transposed by West to follow 243a (by Hartung to follow 243). 243a/244 lacuna posited (and *<μόνον>* added) by Headlam: *μόνος κράτος τε . . .* M. 245 *σοι* Portus: *μοι* M.
246 *πραγμάτων* Robortello, Turnebus: *πρηγμάτων* M: *πημάτων* Schneidewin.

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46 Most likely a lion, in view of the description of Orestes and Pylades as "twin lions" at 938 (cf. also *Ag.* 1259).

your hands, the strokes of the batten and the picture of a beast.[46] [*ELECTRA rushes to embrace him.*] Control yourself—don't go out of your mind with joy: I know that our closest kin are bitterly hostile to us both.

ELECTRA

Dearest one, treasure of your father's house! The seed we wept for, in the hope it would sprout and save us![47] O joyful light,[48] you fill four roles for me.[49] I must needs address you as father, and the affection I owe to a mother falls to you—for *her* I hate, with every justification—and also that of the sister who was pitilessly sacrificed; and you were a faithful brother, the only person who has shown me respect. <For you have come back to save me, and surely,>[50] if you trust in your valour, you will win back possession of your father's house: only let Power and Justice, together with the third,[51] the greatest of them all, Zeus, be with you.

ORESTES

Zeus, Zeus, look down on these things![52] Behold the or-

[47] lit. "wept-for hope of a saving seed".

[48] lit. "eye".

[49] With what follows cf. *Iliad* 6.429–430 (Andromache speaking): "But, Hector, you are to me father and mother and brother, and you are my strong husband."

[50] This supplement is only intended to indicate the likely general sense of the lost part of line 243a. An explanation of the sense in which Orestes has "shown . . . respect" to Electra is badly needed; despite the past verb ἥσθ', it can hardly refer to the time of his exile.

[51] Another allusion to the association of the number three with Zeus the Saviour; see notes on *Supp.* 26, *Ag.* 246, 1385–7.

[52] Or, adopting Schneidewin's emendation, "on these sufferings".

ἰδοῦ δὲ γένναν εὖνιν αἰετοῦ πατρὸς
θανόντος ἐν πλεκταῖσι καὶ σπειράμασιν
δεινῆς ἐχίδνης· τοὺς δ' ἀπωρφανισμένους
νῆστις πιέζει λιμός· οὐ γὰρ ἐντελεῖς
θήραν πατρῴαν προσφέρειν σκηνήμασιν.
οὕτω δὲ κἀμὲ τήνδε τ', Ἠλέκτραν λέγω,
ἰδεῖν πάρεστί σοι, πατροστερῆ γόνον,
ἄμφω φυγὴν ἔχοντε τὴν αὐτὴν δόμων.
καὶ τοῦ θυτῆρος καί σε τιμῶντος μέγα
πατρὸς νεοσσοὺς τούσδ' ἀποφθείρας πόθεν
ἕξεις ὁμοίας χειρὸς εὔθοινον γέρας;
οὔτ' αἰετοῦ γένεθλ' ἀποφθείρας πάλιν
πέμπειν ἔχοις ἂν σήματ' εὐπειθῆ βροτοῖς,
οὔτ' ἀρχικός σοι πᾶς ὅδ' αὐανθεὶς πυθμὴν
βωμοῖς ἀρήξει βουθυτοῖς ἐν ἥμασιν.

247 *γένναν εὖνιν* Turnebus (*γένναν* $^{i}\Sigma^{M}$): *γεννανιν* M: *γέννα, νιν* M^{s}.
250 ἐντελεῖς Pauw: ἐντελὴς M Σ^{M}.
251 *θήραν πατρῴαν* Σ^{M}: *θῆρα πατρῶα* M (*-ώα* M^{s}).
252 λέγω Ald.: ἐγὼ M.
257 εὔθοινον M^{s}: εὔθυνον M: Σ^{M} explains both readings.

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53 Clytaemestra was compared to a serpent in *Ag.* 1233. Vipers do not in fact kill their prey by coiling round them; but it was believed that "when they copulate . . . the female seizes the male by the neck, holds him tight and does not let him go until she has bitten it through. . . . But . . . the young, when they are still in their mother's womb, take revenge for their father by eating through her belly . . . and emerge from her body in that way" (Herodotus

phan brood of the eagle father, of him who died in the twisting coils of the fearsome viper![53] The bereaved children are hard pressed by ravenous hunger, for they are not yet full-grown so as to be able to bring home to the nest the prey their father hunted. So too[54] you can see this woman, Electra, and me, children robbed of their father, both alike in banishment from their home.[55] And if you allow us nestlings to perish, whose father was the great sacrificer who greatly glorified you, from whence will you get the honour of a fine feast given with comparable generosity? If you let the brood of the eagle perish, you would never again be able to send mortals signs that they would readily believe;[56] and if this ruling stock is allowed to shrivel away entirely, it cannot minister to your altars on days when oxen

3.109). The relevance of this to Agamemnon, his wife and his children will be evident even before we learn that Clytaemestra in her dream had given birth to a snake, with which Orestes identifies himself (527–533, 542–550).

54 The speech proceeds as though the metaphorical self-description in 247–251 had been a literal description of the plight of a pair of young eagles.

55 Electra has not literally been banished, but she has been treated in a manner unbefitting a member of the family and has described both herself and Orestes as "virtual vagrants" (132).

56 This is ambiguous, perhaps designedly, between a literal interpretation ("if there are no eagles there can be no omens"—so that Zeus will be damaging his own interests, just as he will if he destroys the house of Agamemnon) and a metaphorical one ("if you destroy the children of the 'eagle' Agamemnon [who as a king was under your special protection, cf. *Ag.* 43–44] you will forfeit all credibility in human eyes").

κόμιζ', ἀπὸ σμικροῦ δ' ἂν ἄρειας μέγαν
δόμον, δοκοῦντα κάρτα νῦν πεπτωκέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ παῖδες, ὦ σωτῆρες ἑστίας πατρός.
σιγᾶθ', ὅπως μὴ πεύσεταί τις, ὦ τέκνα,
γλώσσης χάριν δὲ πάντ' ἀπαγγείλῃ τάδε
πρὸς τοὺς κρατοῦντας· οὓς ἴδοιμ' ἐγώ ποτε
θανόντας ἐν κηκῖδι πισσήρει φλογός.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὗτοι προδώσει Λοξίου μεγασθενὴς
χρησμὸς, κελεύων τόνδε κίνδυνον περᾶν
κἀξορθιάζων πολλὰ καὶ δυσχειμέρους
ἄτας ὑφ' ἧπαρ θερμὸν ἐξαυδώμενος,
εἰ μὴ μέτειμι τοῦ πατρὸς τοὺς αἰτίους
τρόπον τὸν αὐτόν, ἀνταποκτεῖναι λέγων·
αὐτὸν δ' ἔφασκε τῇ φίλῃ ψυχῇ τάδε
τείσειν μ' ἔχοντα πολλὰ δυστερπῆ κακά,
ἀποχρημάτοισι ζημίαις μαυρούμενον.

262 δ' ἂν ἄρειας Turnebus (cf. Σ^{M} δύνασαι . . . ἀνοικοδομῆσαι): δαναρίας M.
269 οὗτοι Turnebus: οὔτι M.
271 κἀξορθιάζων Turnebus: κἀξοθριάζων M.
275 transposed by Hartung to follow 277.
275 μαυρούμενον Hartung: ταυρούμενον M.

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[57] It is doubtless significant that the chorus are afraid only of betrayal through careless talk—which implies that they are sure

are sacrificed. Take care of us, and you can raise this house from littleness to greatness, a house that to all appearance is now utterly fallen.

CHORUS

Children, saviours of your father's hearth, keep quiet, for fear someone finds out, children, and for the sake of talking[57] tells all this to the rulers—whom may I one day see dead in the pitchy ooze of the flame![58]

ORESTES

The mighty oracle of Loxias will assuredly not betray me.[59] It bade me brave this peril, it cried forth many things, and it spoke openly of catastrophes that will bring dire chill into my hot heart,[60] if I do not pursue those guilty of my father's death "in the same manner"—meaning, kill them in revenge. He said that I myself would pay for it[61] with my own dear life, enduring many disagreeable sufferings, enfeebled by penalties that went beyond loss of property. He

there is virtually nobody who would *intentionally* betray Agamemnon's children (even in hope of a reward).

58 This does not refer to a funeral pyre (mention of which would be irrelevant ornamentation) but to the terrible punishment of being coated with pitch and burnt alive (Aesch. fr. 118; *trag. adesp.* 226a; Plato, *Gorgias* 473c; Hesychius κ4849).

59 This seems *prima facie* to imply that Apollo has promised support, but no such promise is actually mentioned in this speech (or at any time before 1030–2), only commands and menaces.

60 lit. "liver"; θερμόν "hot" implies "headstrong, audacious" (cf. *Seven* 603, *Eum.* 560), because Orestes would be directly defying Apollo and, as we shall presently hear, the Furies.

61 That is, for *failing* to take revenge.

278 τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ γῆς δυσφρόνων μηνίματα
βροτοῖς πιφαύσκων εἶπε τάσδ' αἰνὰς νόσους,
280 σαρκῶν ἐπεμβατῆρας ἀγρίαις γνάθοις
λειχῆνας ἐξέσθοντας ἀρχαίαν φύσιν,
λευκὰς δὲ κόρσας τῇδ' ἐπαντέλλειν νόσῳ·
ἄλλας τ' ἐφώνει προσβολὰς Ἐρινύων
284 ἐκ τῶν πατρῴων αἱμάτων τελουμένας·
286 τὸ γὰρ σκοτεινὸν τῶν ἐνερτέρων βέλος
ἐκ προστροπαίων ἐν γένει πεπτωκότων
καὶ λύσσα καὶ μάταιος ἐκ νυκτῶν φόβος
κινεῖ, ταράσσει, καὶ διωκάθει πόλεως
290 χαλκηλάτῳ πλάστιγγι λυμανθὲν δέμας·
καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις οὔτε κρατῆρος μέρος
εἶναι μετασχεῖν, οὐ φιλοσπόνδου λιβός,
βωμῶν τ' ἀπείργειν οὐχ ὁρωμένην πατρὸς

278 μηνίματα Lobeck: μειλίγματα M Σ^{M}.
279 τάσδ' αἰνὰς Groeneboom: τὰς δὲ νω (νῶν M^{s}) M.
280 ἐπεμβατῆρας Auratus or Portus: ἐπαμβατῆρας M.
282 ἐπαντέλλειν *t*: ἐπαν(α)τέλλει M *t*.
283 τ' ἐφώνει Auratus: τε φωνεῖ M.
{285} ὁρῶντα λαμπρὸν ἐν σκότῳ νωμῶντ' ὀφρύν M: del. H. L. Ahrens.
289 διωκάθει Porson: διώκεσθαι M.
291 κρατῆρος Robortello, Turnebus: κρατερὸς M.

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62 For this characteristic of the skin-disease (λεύκη) that is here being described, cf. Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* 518a12–13 and [Aristotle], *On Colours* 797b14–16.

63 Line 285 ("seeing clearly, moving his/her/their eyebrows in

revealed the effects of the wrath of hostile powers from under the earth against mortals, and spoke of these dreadful afflictions—leprous ulcers attacking the flesh, eating away its pristine appearance with savage jaws, and short white hairs arising on the disease site.[62] He spoke too of other assaults of Furies, generated by the blood of a father:[63] the dark weapon of the powers below, arising from those of one's kin who have fallen and beg for justice, together with madness and empty night-time terrors, derange him, harry him, and chase him from his city, physically humiliated by a metal collar.[64] And men such as this, he said, are not permitted to have a share in the mixing-bowl[65] or in the pouring of a friendly libation; the father's unseen wrath keeps him away from altars; no one will re-

the dark") can hardly belong here; a detailed description of, say, a nightmare vision would break the connection between the statement of the Furies' various torments in 286–290—of which nightmares (288) are only one—and the "headline" sentence 283–4 of which that statement provides a detailed exposition. Possibly the line is a remnant of a passage (from another Aeschylean play?) cited by a commentator in illustration of 288.

64 There is probably an allusion to rituals involving human scapegoats (*φάρμακοι*) who were ceremonially flogged out of a city as a purification rite (see Hipponax frr. 5–10 and 104.49; Harpocration *φ*5; W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* tr. J. Raffan [Oxford, 1985] 82–84). At Athens they were draped with necklaces of dried figs (Photius, *Bibliotheca* 279 p.534a2–11); here this is replaced by a metal collar (for this sense of *πλάστιγξ* cf. [Euripides], *Rhesus* 303), perhaps with allusion to the collar used in execution by *apotympanismos* (see Introduction to *Prometheus Bound*). See L. Battezzato, *Studi Classici e Orientali* 42 (1992) 71–76.

65 i.e. in the wine at a symposium.

μῆνιν· δέχεσθαι δ' οὔτε συλλύειν τινά,
πάντων δ' ἄτιμον κἄφιλον θνῄσκειν χρόνῳ
κακῶς ταριχευθέντα παμφθάρτῳ μόρῳ.
τοιοῖσδε χρησμοῖς ἆρα χρὴ πεποιθέναι;
κεἰ μὴ πέποιθα, τοὔργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον.
πολλοὶ γὰρ εἰς ἓν συμπίτνουσιν ἴμεροι,
θεοῦ τ' ἐφετμαὶ καὶ πατρὸς πένθος μέγα,
καὶ πρὸς πιέζει χρημάτων ἀχηνία,
< >
τὸ μὴ πολίτας εὐκλεεστάτους βροτῶν,
Τροίας ἀναστατῆρας εὐδόξῳ φρενί,
δυοῖν γυναικοῖν ὧδ' ὑπηκόους πέλειν·
θήλεια γὰρ φρὴν εἴτε μὴ τάχ' εἴσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ', ὦ μεγάλαι Μοῖραι, Διόθεν
τῇδε τελευτᾶν,
ᾗ τὸ δίκαιον μεταβαίνει.
"ἀντὶ μὲν ἐχθρᾶς γλώσσης ἐχθρὰ

294 δ' Hermann: M has an unidentifiable, erased letter.
301/2 lacuna posited by Butler.
305 εἴτε Garvie: εἰ δὲ M.

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66 This exclusion from the sharing of rituals and of roofs, with which Orestes is threatened if he does not carry out the revenge killings, was precisely the fate that was deemed appropriate, throughout the Greek world, for those who *had* committed homicide or been complicit in it (cf. *Eum.* 655–6; Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 236–241; Demosthenes 20.158).

ceive him as a host or lodge with him as a guest,[66] and finally he will die, devoid of all respect and devoid of all friends, cruelly shrivelled in a death of total decay.[67] Should I not believe such an oracle as that? Even if I do not, the deed still has to be done. Many motives join together to point the same way: the command of the god, my great grief for my father, being deprived of my property weighs heavy on me, ‹and it is also my duty to liberate the city›[68] so that its citizens, the most glorious people on earth, who overthrew Troy with resolute heart, should not remain, as they now are, subjected to a pair of women—for he'll soon know whether he[69] really has a woman's heart or not!

ORESTES, ELECTRA and the CHORUS gather round the tomb.

CHORUS

Now, you mighty Fates, by the will of Zeus
let things end in the way
in which Justice is now in pursuit!
"For hostile words let hostile words

[67] This refers primarily to wasting of the still living body (cf. Sophron fr. 54 K-A; also Demosthenes 25.61, of the effect of long imprisonment) but may also hint at the possibility of the dead body being left unburied.

[68] Some such supplement is necessary; 302–4 cannot (as Garvie wishes) be closely linked with 301, because the question who is to possess Agamemnon's property and the question how Argos is to be governed are in principle two entirely separate issues (cf. *Odyssey* 1.389–398).

[69] Aegisthus.

γλῶσσα τελείσθω", τοὐφειλόμενον
πράσσουσα Δίκη μέγ' ἀϋτεῖ·
"ἀντὶ δὲ πληγῆς φονίας φονίαν
πληγὴν τινέτω." δράσαντι παθεῖν,
τριγέρων μῦθος τάδε φωνεῖ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

στρ. α ὦ πάτερ αἰνόπατερ, τί σοι
φάμενος ἢ τί ῥέξας
τύχοιμ' ἂν ἑκάθεν οὐρίσας,
ἔνθα σ' ἔχουσιν εὐναί;
σκότῳ φάος ἀντίμοιρον, χάριτες δ' ὁμοίως
κέκληνται γόος εὐκλεὴς
προσθοδόμοις Ἀτρείδαις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. β τέκνον, φρόνημα τοῦ θανόντος οὐ δαμά-
ζει πυρὸς μαλερὰ γνάθος,
φαίνει δ' ὕστερον ὀργάς.
ὀτοτύζεται δ' ὁ θνάσκων,
ἀναφαίνεται δ' ὁ βλάπτων,

311 μέγ' ἀϋτεῖ M^{s}: μέγαυτι M.
317 ἔκαθεν M^{s} iΣ^{M}: καθεν M.
319 ἀντίμοιρον Erfurdt, cf. Σ^{M} ἐναντίον: ἰσοτιμοιρον M.
325 μαλερὰ Porson: ἡ μαλερὰ M.

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70 lit. "let him/her pay"; the chorus are presumably thinking of Clytaemestra, who actually struck the "bloody strokes", but they do not make the payer's identity (or even gender) explicit.

be paid"—so Justice
cries out aloud, demanding what she is owed—
"and for a bloody stroke let the payment be[70]
a bloody stroke." *For him who does, suffering*—
that is what the old, old saying states.

ORESTES

Father who suffered so terribly, what
can I say, what can I do,
that I can send successfully on a fair wind from afar
to where your resting-place confines you?
Light is the opposite of darkness, and similarly[71]
lamentation,
if it gives them honour, is called gratification
by the Atreidae who lie here before the palace.[72]

CHORUS

Child, the spirit of the dead is not subdued
by the ravening jaws of fire,
and in the end he makes his anger manifest.
He who dies is bewailed—
he who can harm is made to appear,[73]

[71] So Sier understands ὁμοίως (rather than "all the same, nevertheless", which most recent editors favour). The fact that lamentation, which the living find displeasing and ill-omened, is gratifying to the dead is in harmony, not in contrast, with the fact that light and darkness are opposites.

[72] The inevitable tension between thinking of the dead as dwelling in their tombs, and thinking of them as dwelling in the remote realm of Hades, surfaces here as the near-contradiction between this line and 317–8 ("from afar to where your resting-place confines you").

[73] "He who dies" and "he who can harm" are the same person.

πατέρων τε καὶ τεκόντων
γόος ἐκ δίκαν ματεύει
τὸ πᾶν ἀμφιλαφὴς ταραχθείς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀντ. α κλῦθί νυν, ὦ πάτερ, ἐν μέρει
πολυδάκρυτα πένθη·
δίπαις τοί σ' ἐπιτύμβιος
θρῆνος ἀναστενάζει·
τάφος δ' ἱκέτας δέδεκται φυγάδας θ' ὁμοίως.
τί τῶνδ' εὖ, τί δ' ἄτερ κακῶν;
οὐκ ἀτρίακτος ἄτα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἔτ' ἂν ἐκ τῶνδε θεὸς χρῄζων
θείη κελάδους εὐφθογγοτέρους,
ἀντὶ δὲ θρήνων ἐπιτυμβιδίων
παιὼν μελάθροις ἐν βασιλείοις
νεοκρᾶτα φίλον κομίσειεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

στρ. γ εἰ γὰρ ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ
πρός τινος Λυκίων, πάτερ,
δορίτμητος κατηναρίσθης·

330 ἐκ δίκαν Murray, cf. ΣM ζητεῖ . . . τὴν ἐκδίκησιν: ἔνδικος M. 334 τοί σ' Schütz, ἐπιτύμβιος Hermann: τοῖς ἐπιτυμβιδίοις M. 335 ἀναστενάζει *m*: ἀναστενάξει M (?).
341 θείη Turnebus: θήῃ M.
344 κομίσειεν Porson: κομίζει M.
347 κατηναρίσθης Porson: κατεναρίσθης M.

and lamentation for a father and begetter,
when it is stirred up in full abundance,
tracks down vengeance.

ELECTRA

So hear, father, in turn
our grief, expressed with many tears:
see, at your tomb your two children
lament and groan for you:
your burial-place has welcomed us as suppliants who are
also fugitives.[74]
In all this, what is good, what is free from evil?
Is not ruin unconquerable?[75]

CHORUS

But even from this situation god can still, if he wishes,
turn your songs into more auspicious ones,
and instead of laments at a tomb
the paean may be heard in the royal halls
bringing in the welcome bowl of new-mixed wine.

ORESTES

If only, father,
you had been cut down and slain with the spear
at Ilium, by the hand of some Lycian![76]

[74] Cf. 254.

[75] lit. "incapable of being thrown three times", i.e. of being defeated in a wrestling match (cf. *Ag.* 171–2).

[76] The Lycians are allies of the Trojans in the *Iliad*, their most notable warrior being Sarpedon.

λιπὼν ἂν εὔκλειαν ἐν δόμοισιν
τέκνων τ᾽ ἐν κελεύθοις ἐπίστρεπτον αἰῶ
κτίσας πολύχωστον ἂν εἶχες
τάφον διαποντίου γᾶς,
δώμασιν εὐφόρητον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. β φίλος φίλοισι τοῖς ἐκεῖ καλῶς θανοῦ-
σιν, κατὰ χθονὸς ἐμπρέπων
σεμνότιμος ἀνάκτωρ
πρόπολός τε τῶν μεγίστων
χθονίων ἐκεῖ τυράννων·
βασιλεὺς γὰρ ἦν, ὅφρ᾽ ἔζη,
μόριμον λάχος πιπάλλων
χεροῖν πεισίβροτόν τε βάκτρον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀντ. γ μηδ᾽ ὑπὸ Τρωΐας
τείχεσι φθίμενος, πάτερ,
μετ᾽ ἄλλῳ δουρικμῆτι λαῷ
παρὰ Σκαμάνδρου πόρον τεθάφθαι·

349 τ᾽ ἐν Wellauer: τε M.
350 αἰῶ H. L. Ahrens: αἰῶνα M.
352 γᾶς Turnebus: ταις M.
360 ἦν . . . ἔζη Hermann: ἦν (ἧς Mˢˢᶜʳ) . . . ἔζης M: ἦσθ᾽ . . . ἔζης Abresch, Markland.
361 πιπάλλων Wilamowitz (cf. ΣM ἔχων): πιμπλάντων M.
362 πεισίβροτόν Pauw (πεισιμβρ- m): πισίμβροτόν M.
365 ἄλλῳ Stanley: ἄλλων M.
366 τεθάφθαι Tafel (cf. ΣM λείπει τὸ ὤφειλες): τέθαψαι M.

You would have left behind you glory in your house,
given your children a life in which all would turn to look
at them
in the streets,[77] and had a tomb heaped high
with foreign soil,
an easy burden for your house to bear—

CHORUS

Cherishing and cherished by those who died nobly
there,
prominent among them beneath the earth
as a ruler honoured and revered,
and an attendant of the greatest
underworld lords in that realm;[78]
for he was a king while he lived,
wielding in his hands the power of life and death
and the sceptre that gained men's obedience.

ELECTRA

Would that you had not even died
under the walls of Troy, father,
to be buried by the stream of Scamander
with the rest of the host that fell by the spear!

[77] sc. in admiration.

[78] So Demosthenes (60.34) says at a public funeral of those killed in war: "One may say with probability that they sit beside the underworld gods, having the same station as the brave men of old." Contrariwise, Polyxene in Euripides' *Hecuba* (551–2), though a princess, fears that if she dies like a slave she will be a slave in Hades.

πάρος δ' οἱ κτανόντες νιν οὕτω δαμῆναι,
<×–> θανατηφόρον αἶσαν
πρόσω τινὰ πυνθάνεσθαι
τῶνδε πόνων ἄπειρον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταῦτα μέν, ὦ παῖ, κρείσσονα χρυσοῦ,
μεγάλης δὲ τύχης καὶ ὑπερβορέου
μείζονα φωνεῖς· δύνασαι γάρ.
ἀλλὰ διπλῆς γὰρ τῆσδε μαράγνης
δοῦπος ἱκνεῖται· τῶν μὲν ἀρωγοὶ
κατὰ γῆς ἤδη, τῶν δὲ κρατούντων
χέρες οὐχ ὅσιαι, στυγερῶν τούτων
<
παισὶ δὲ μᾶλλον γεγένηται.

369 <τοῖς ἦν> Schadewaldt (cf. ΣM τοῖς ἐκείνων): <δᾴοις> West. 374 φωνεῖς Turnebus, δύνασαι Hermann: φωνεῖ· ὁ δυνᾶσαι M. 377 ὅσιαι Ms: ὁσί[ ] M.

378/9 lacuna posited by West, who suggests e.g. <ἀχέων ἀρχαί, πατρί τ' ὀνείδη>.

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79 This can hardly mean "slain in battle at Troy", since that would be inapplicable to Clytaemestra, and in any case Electra would hardly wish, even hypothetically, for what would have been a glorious death for Aegisthus; rather, in the light of the following πρόσω, it will be taken to mean more generally "far from home".

80 As the last words of the sentence show, Electra is referring to those who have in actuality experienced "these present troubles"—herself, Agamemnon's family, and perhaps the Argives generally.

81 Cf. Pindar, *Pythian* 10.29–44 (no mortal but Perseus has

Rather should his killers have been slain so,[79]
<so that> someone far away[80]
would have learned of their deadly fate
without experiencing these present troubles.

CHORUS

That, my child, would be better than gold;
you talk of something greater than great,
than Hyperborean, good fortune[81]—because talking
comes cheap![82]
But the crack of this double lash
strikes home: on one side those who might have helped
are now beneath the earth,[83] while on the other the
unclean hands
of the rulers, <the cause> of these
hateful <sufferings, are a reproach to the father>[84]
and even more so to the children.

ever reached the land of the Hyperboreans; Apollo delights in their feasts, which abound in music and dance, and they are free of disease and old age, of toil and warfare).

[82] lit. "because you *can* (sc. talk)".

[83] We are less likely to think here of the old men of the chorus in *Agamemnon* (as West, *Studies* 243 n.16 does) than (after 355–6 and 365) of those who fought with Agamemnon at Troy, virtually all of whom (in Aeschylus' version) perished either in the war or on the voyage home (*Ag.* 636–680); so apparently the scholia ("our allies, those around Agamemnon"). The expression will simultaneously remind us of the avengers' other allies beneath the earth, the chthonic gods and the spirit of Agamemnon; but they can look for no armed assistance from any mortal *on* the earth.

[84] I translate West's *exempli gratia* supplement; something powerful is certainly needed to have the effect on Orestes that he describes in 380–1.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

στρ. δ τοῦτο διαμπερὲς οὗς
ἵκεθ' ἅπερ τε βέλος.
Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, κάτωθεν ἀμπέμπων
ὑστερόποινον ἄταν
βροτῶν τλάμονι καὶ πανούργῳ
χειρί· τοκεῦσι δ' ὁμῶς τελεῖται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. ε ἐφυμνῆσαι γένοιτό μοι †πευκή-
εντ'† ὀλολυγμὸν ἀνδρὸς
θεινομένου γυναικός τ'
ὀλλυμένας· τί γὰρ κεύ-
θω φρενὸς οἷον ἐντὸς
ποταῖται; πάροιθεν δὲ πρῴρας
δριμὺς ἄηται κραδίας
θυμός, ἔγκοτον στύγος.

380 οὗς Schütz: ὡς Mac; ὡς Mpc.
386–7 *πευκήεντ'* M: *πυκάεντ'* Dindorf (cf. Theognostus, *Canones* 129.5 *πυκᾶες· ἰσχυρόν*).
390 *οἷον* Hermann, *ἐντὸς* Martin: *θεῖον ἔμπας* M.

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85 Presumably addressing "the Zeus of the underworld", i.e. Hades (see on *Ag.* 1386–7).

86 *τοκεῦσι* could equally well be dative of the recipient ("to my parents") or of the agent ("by my parents"); in fact, of course, the payment will be made by one parent to the other.

ORESTES

That pierced straight through
my ear, like an arrow.
Zeus, Zeus,[85] who sends up from below
avenging ruin, soon or late,
against audacious, reckless
human violence! For my parents, both alike, there will
be payment![86]

CHORUS

May it be my lot to raise a massed[87] cry
of triumph over a man
struck down and a woman
perishing; for why should I conceal
what kind of thought is hovering
within my mind? Ahead of the prow
of my heart there blows a harsh wind
of anger, of raging hatred.[88]

87 This, or something like it, must be the meaning of *πυκάεντ'* (derived from the adverb *πύκα* "densely"), if this barely attested word, conjectured here by Dindorf, did indeed exist. The transmitted reading, *πευκήεντ'*, gives good sense ("piercing") but raises serious metrical problems here and in the antistrophe (410).

88 The image of a mental "headwind" suggests that they feel irresistibly driven, in spite of any possible softer inclinations, to long eagerly for the violent death of Aegisthus and Clytaemestra, even though they are by now aware, from Orestes' report of Apollo's oracle, that this must involve matricide. Similarly Agamemnon is described as "blowing with *the blast of fortune that struck him*" (Ag. 186) when he changed course (Ag. 219) and zealously sacrificed his daughter.

ἀντ. δ καὶ πότ' ἂν ἀμφιθαλὴς
Ζεὺς ἐπὶ χεῖρα βάλοι,
φεῦ φεῦ, κάρανα δαΐξας;
πιστὰ γένοιτο χώρᾳ.
δίκαν δ' ἐξ ἀδίκων ἀπαιτῶ.
κλῦτε δὲ Γᾶ χθονίων τε τιμαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλὰ νόμος μὴν φονίας σταγόνας
χυμένας εἰς πέδον ἄλλο προσαιτεῖν
αἷμα· βοᾷ γὰρ λοιγὸς Ἐρινὺν
παρὰ τῶν πρότερον φθιμένων ἄτην
ἑτέραν ἐπάγουσαν ἐπ' ἄτῃ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

στρ. ζ ποποῖ δᾶ, νερτέρων τυραννίδες
ἴδετε πολυκρατεῖς, Ἀραί τε φθιτῶν,
ἴδεσθ' Ἀτρειδῶν τὰ λοίπ' ἀμηχάνως
ἔχοντα καὶ δωμάτων ἄτιμα. πᾷ
τις τράποιτ' ἄν, ὦ Ζεῦ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. ε πέπαλται δαῖτ' ἐμοὶ φίλον κέαρ
τόνδε κλύουσαν οἶκτον·

399 Γᾶ H. L. Ahrens and Franz: *τα* M.
400 ἀλλὰ *νόμος* Turnebus, *μὴν* West: ἀλλ' ἄνομος *μὲν* M.
402 λοιγὸς Ἐρινὺν Schütz: *λοιγὸν ἐρινὺς* M $^{i}\Sigma^{M}$.
403 *πρότερον* Portus: *προτέρων* M.
405 *ποποῖ* δᾶ Bamberger: ποῖ ποῖ δὴ M.

ELECTRA

When, O when will almighty
Zeus lay his hand upon them—
ah, ah!—splitting their heads?
May the land be given a pledge![89]
I am demanding justice in place of injustice:
hear me, Earth, and you honoured gods below!

CHORUS

Well, it is certainly the law that when drops of gore
flow to the ground, they demand other
blood; for slaughter cries out for a Fury
who comes from those who perished before to bring
further ruin upon ruin.

ORESTES

Popoi, dah! See us, you mighty
rulers of the underworld, and you Curses of the dead![90]
See what is left of the Atreid family, in a state
of helplessness, excluded in dishonour from their home!
O Zeus, where can one turn?

CHORUS

Truly my heart within me is shaking in its turn
as I listen to this lament;

[89] A pledge, that is, "that justice will always triumph and that Zeus is in control" (Garvie); cf. 258–9.

[90] i.e. the Furies (cf. *Eum.* 417, *Seven* 70).

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406 *τε φθιτῶν* Sier: *φθιμένων* (from 403) M^{s}: *φθειμένων* M.
409 *πᾷ* M^{s}: *πε* M.
410 *πέπαλται* Turnebus: *πεπάλαται* M^{s}: *πεπάλατε* M.
410 δαὖτ' (δαὖτέ) Bergk, *ἐμοὶ* Paley: δ' *αὖτέ μοι* M.

καὶ τότε μὲν δύσελπις,
σπλάγχνα δέ μοι κελαινοῦ-
ταὶ πρὸς ἔπος κλυούσᾳ·
ὅταν δ' αὖτ' ἐπαλκὲς < >,
θάρσος ἀπέστασεν ἄχος
†πρὸς τὸ φανεῖσθαι† μοι καλῶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀντ. ζ τί δ' ἂν φάντες τύχοιμεν; ἢ τάπερ
πάθομεν ἄχεα πρός γε τῶν τεκομένων;
πάρεστι σαίνειν, τὰ δ' οὐχὶ θέλγεται·
λύκος γὰρ ὥστ' ὠμόφρων ἄσαντος ἐκ
ματρός ἐστι θυμός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. η ἔκοψα κομμὸν Ἄριον ἔν τε Κισσίας
νόμοις ἰηλεμιστρίας·

413 μοι Schütz: μου M.
414 κλυούσᾳ M^{s} $i\Sigma^{M}$: κλύουσαν M.
415 ἐπαλκές <τι φωνῆς> West: ἐπ' ἀλκὰν (Blaydes) <τράπωμαι> Garvie.
416 θάρσος Ludwig: θραρέ M.
417 πρὸς τὸ φανεῖσθαι (an intrusive annotation) M: προσδοκᾶν τι West: perh. e.g. ξυμφέρειν τι (cf. *Supp.* 753).
418 φάντες Bothe, cf. Σ^{M} εἰπόντες: πάντες M.
418 τύχοιμεν Hermann: τύχοιμεν ἂν M.
419 ἄχεα (ἄχη) Σ^{M} 420: ἄχθεα M.
423 Ἄριον Hermann, ἔν τε Bothe: ἄρειον εἴτε M.
423 Κισσίας Robortello, Turnebus: κισσίαις M.
424 ἰηλεμιστρίας Hesychius ι367: ιλεμιστρίας M.

and then I lose hope,
and my inward parts turn dark[91]
when I hear these words;
but when ‹you say something› courageous,
the pain is displaced by confidence
‹that things will turn out› well for me.[92]

ELECTRA

What can we say that will hit the mark? Should it be
the pains we have suffered, and from a parent, too?
She may fawn on us,[93] but they cannot be soothed;
for like a savage-hearted wolf, we have a rage,
caused by our mother, that is past fawning.

CHORUS [*beating their heads and tearing at their hair*]
I strike myself blows like an Arian[94] and in the manner
of a Cissian wailing woman;[95]

[91] The internal organs could be spoken of as turning black when affected by powerful emotions (because blood flowed inwards from the surface regions which went pale?) Cf. *Pers.* 114–5, *Supp.* 785.

[92] The text of the last three lines is very insecure; I translate West's tentative suggestion in 415, and my own in 417.

[93] As she deceptively, and successfully, fawned on Agamemnon (cf. *Ag.* 1228–9).

[94] i.e. Iranian (both words derive from Old Persian *ariya*); for Herodotus (7.62.1, 7.66.1) this was the old name of the Medes and the current name of another Iranian people.

[95] ἰηλεμιστρία is formed like an occupational term, and suggests a professional mourner. Cissia was the region (corresponding approximately to modern Khuzestan/al-Ahwaz in south-west Iran) in which lay the Persian capital, Susa (cf. Herodotus 5.49.7).

425 ἀπρικτόπληκτα πολυπάλακτα †δὴν ειδεῖν†
ἐπασσυτεροτριβῆ τε χερὸς ὀρέγματα
ἄνωθεν ἀνέκαθεν, κτύπῳ δ' ἐπιρροθεῖ
κροτητὸν ἁμὸν πανάθλιον κάρα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

στρ. θ ἰὼ ἰὼ δαΐα
430 πάντολμε μᾶτερ, δαΐαις ἐν ἐκφοραῖς
ἄνευ πολιτᾶν ἄνακτ',
ἄνευ δὲ πενθημάτων
433 ἔτλας ἀνοίμωκτον ἄνδρα θάψαι.

439 ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. ι ἐμασχαλίσθη δ' ἔθ', ὡς τόδ' εἰδῇς·
440 ἔπρασσε δ' ἅπερ νιν ὧδε θάπτει,
μόρον κτίσαι μωμένα

425 ἀπρικτόπλ- Heath, cf. Σ^{M} ἄπριξ: ἄπριγκτοι πλ- M.
425 πολυπάλακτα Bothe: πολυπάλαγκτα (or—ται: υ altered from ύ) M.
425 δὴν ειδεῖν M (ϊ M$^{s\ sscr}$): δ' ἦν ἰδεῖν Robortello, Turnebus: perh. δή 'στ' ἰδεῖν or δὴ 'πιδεῖν.
426 τε Musgrave: τὰ M.
428 πανάθλιον Enger: καὶ πανάθλιον M.
439–443 transposed by anon. (ap. Murray) to precede 434–8.
439 ἐμασχαλίσθη Robortello: ἐμασχαλίσθης M.
439 δ' ἔθ' ὡς Canter, τόδ' Pauw: δὲ τωστοστ M.
441 κτίσαι Bourdelot, cf. Σ^{M} κατασκευάζουσα: κτεῖναι (ν in an erasure) M.

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[96] As if to tear out hair; cf. *Pers.* 1056; Sophocles, *Ajax* 310, 634; Euripides, *Andromache* 826, *Trojan Women* 279.

my arms stretch out, hitting and grasping,[96]
beating thick and fast, making many a smirch to
behold,[97]
from above, from high above, and my wretched head
rings with the sound of my battering.

ELECTRA

Ió, ió, cruel mother
of limitless audacity, it was a cruel funeral
when you had the hardihood to bury your husband,
a king, without the presence of his city's people,
without mourning and with no lamentation!

CHORUS[98] [*to ORESTES*]

And—so you may know this—he was mutilated[99] as well;
and the perpetrator was she who buried him thus,
striving to make his death

[97] i.e. drawing blood; with the whole passage cf. 23–31.

[98] I have accepted the transposition of strophe and antistrophe: Orestes' reaction in 434–8 is too strong to be plausibly provoked merely by the statement—which can hardly come as a surprise to him—that there was no public mourning when Agamemnon was buried, and τὸ πᾶν ἀτίμως ἔλεξας (434) suggests that he has been told more than that.

[99] By cutting off his extremities (hands and feet, sometimes also nose and ears), stringing them together and tying them around his neck and under his armpits (μασχάλαι) with a view, *inter alia*, to disabling his ghost from pursuit and vengeance. Cf. Sophocles, *Electra* 445; Sophocles fr. 528, 623 (probably Troilus mutilated by Achilles); Apollonius Rhodius 4.477 (Medea's brother Apsyrtus mutilated by Jason); and see E. Rohde, *Psyche* (tr. W. B. Hillis, London, 1925) 582–6.

ἄφερτον αἰῶνι σῷ.
443 κλύεις πατρῴους δύας ἀτίμους;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

434
ἀντ. ι τὸ πᾶν ἀτίμως ἔλεξας, οἴμοι·
435 πατρὸς δ' ἀτίμωσιν ἆρα τείσει
ἔκατι μὲν δαιμόνων,
ἔκατι δ' ἁμᾶν χερῶν.
438 ἔπειτ' ἐγὼ νοσφίσας ὀλοίμαν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

444–5 λέγεις πατρῷον μόρον· ἐγὼ δ' ἀπεστάτουν
ἀντ. η ἄτιμος, οὐδὲν ἀξία,
μυχῷ δ' ἄφειρκτος πολυσινοῦς κυνὸς δίκαν
ἑτοιμότερα γέλωτος ἀνέφερον λίβη,
χέουσα πολύδακρυν γόον κεκρυμμένα.
450 τοιαῦτ' ἀκούων <τάδ'> ἐν φρεσὶν <γράφου>.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. θ γράφου· δι' ὥτων δὲ συν-
τέτραινε μῦθον ἡσύχῳ φρενῶν βάθει.
τὰ μὲν γὰρ οὕτως ἔχει,
τὰ δ' αὐτὸς ὀργᾷ μαθεῖν.
455 πρέπει δ' ἀκάμπτῳ μένει καθήκειν.

442 *ἄφερτον* Robortello: *ἄφερκτον* M.
443 *κλύεις* Turnebus: *κλύει* M.
443 *δύας ἀτίμους* Portus: δυσατίμους M.
438 *ὀλοίμαν* Turnebus, cf. Σ^{M} *τεθναίην*: ἑλοίμᾱν M.
447 *μυχῷ* Stanley: *μυχοῦ* M.
449 *χέουσα* Dobree: *χέρουσα* M^{ac}: *χαίρουσα* M^{pc}.

unbearable for you to live with.
Do you hear these degrading sufferings of your father?

ORESTES

You tell a tale of utter degradation!
Well, she shall pay for degrading my father,
with the help of the gods
and with the help of my hands.
Then, when I have removed her, let me die!

ELECTRA

You speak of our father's death.[100] I was not there—
I was dishonoured, treated as worthless;
shut up in the bowels of the house, like a dangerous dog,
I brought up drops that flowed more readily than
laughter,
pouring out a lament full of tears, though hidden from
view.
Such is the tale you must hear: record it in your mind.

CHORUS

Yes, record it, and let the words pierce
right through your ears to the quiet depths of your mind.
For such is the first part of the story,
and the second part he himself[101] is burning to learn.
You must enter the arena with inflexible will.

100 Here to be understood as including the funeral.

101 i.e. Agamemnon; "the second part" of the story will be the news that he has been avenged.

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450 <τάδ'> add. Wilamowitz, <γράφου> add. Klausen.
452 φρενῶν Turnebus, βάθει Jacobs: φρονῶν βάσει M.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

στρ. κ σέ τοι λέγω, ξυγγενοῦ, πάτερ, φίλοις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγὼ δ' ἐπιφθέγγομαι κεκλαυμένα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στάσις δὲ πάγκοινος ἅδ' ἐπιρροθεῖ·
ἄκουσον εἰς φάος μολών,
460 ξὺν δὲ γενοῦ πρὸς ἐχθρούς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀντ. κ Ἄρης Ἄρει ξυμβαλεῖ, Δίκᾳ Δίκα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰὼ θεοί, κραίνετ' ἐνδίκως < ∪ – >.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τρόμος μ' ὑφέρπει κλύουσαν εὐγμάτων·
τὸ μόρσιμον μένει πάλαι,
465 εὐχομένοις δ' ἂν ἔλθοι.

στρ. λ ὦ πόνος ἐγγενὴς
καὶ παράμουσος Ἄτας
αἱματόεσσα πλαγά·
ἰὼ δύστον' ἄφερτα κήδη,
470 ἰὼ δυσκατάπαυστον ἄλγος.

ἀντ. λ δώμασιν ἔμμοτον

461 ξυμβαλεῖ Pauw: ξυμβάλλει M.
462 ‹τάδε› suppl. Butler: ‹λιτάς› Newman: ‹τέλος› Franz.

ORESTES

I call on you, father: be with your friends.

ELECTRA

And I, through my tears, add my voice.

CHORUS

And this united company joins the cry:
hearken, rise to the light,
and be with us against our foes.

ORESTES

Violence will clash with violence, justice with justice!

ELECTRA

O you gods, bring < >[102] to fulfilment in accordance with justice!

CHORUS

A tremor steals over me as I hear these prayers:
fate has tarried long,
but in answer to prayer it may come.

O misery bred in the family!
O bloody, discordant
stroke of Ruin!
Ió, lamentable, unbearable sorrows!
Ió, pain so hard to bring to an end!

It is the house that must provide the plug

[102] There are many possible supplements, e.g. "this" (Butler), "our prayers" (Newman), "the outcome" (Franz).

τῶνδ' ἄκος, οὐδ' ἀπ' ἄλλων
ἔκτοθεν, ἀλλ' ἀπ' αὐτῶν,
δι' ὠμὰν Ἔριν αἱματηράν.
θεῶν τῶν κατὰ γᾶς ὅδ' ὕμνος,

ἀλλὰ κλυόντες, μάκαρες χθόνιοι,
τῆσδε κατευχῆς πέμπετ' ἀρωγὴν
παισὶν προφρόνως ἐπὶ νίκῃ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πάτερ, τρόποισιν οὐ τυραννικοῖς θανών,
αἰτουμένῳ μοι δὸς κράτος τῶν σῶν δόμων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κἀγώ, πάτερ, τοιάνδε σου χρείαν ἔχω,
†φυγεῖν μέγαν προσθεῖσαν† Αἰγίσθῳ < ∪ – >.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὕτω γὰρ ἄν σοι δαῖτες ἔννομοι βροτῶν
κτιζοίατ'· εἰ δὲ μή, παρ' εὐδείπνοις ἔσῃ

472 ἄκος Schütz: ἑκὰς M. 474 δι' ὠμὰν Klausen, ἔριν Hermann (cf. Σ^{M} ἦν ἤρισε): αιωμαναιρειν M.
475 θεῶν τῶν Wellauer: θεῶν M.
478 νίκῃ Portus: νίκην M.
480 αἰτουμένῳ Turnebus: αἰτούμενος M.
481 τοιάνδε Turnebus: τοιάδε M. 482 φυγεῖν μέγαν προσθεῖσαν Αἰγίσθῳ M: φυγεῖν μ' ἐς ἀνδρὸς θῆσσαν Αἰγ. <τύχην> Headlam: τυχεῖν (Schütz) με γαμβροῦ (Heyse) θεῖσαν (Canter) Αἰγ. <μόρον> (Turnebus) Wecklein.

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103 When a wound became, or was expected to become, septic, it was the practice to insert a plug of lint (μοτός)—a "tent", in the

for this wound,[103] and the cure cannot come from others
outside, but from members of the house itself,
through cruel, bloody Strife.
This is the song of the gods beneath the earth.

Now hear this prayer,
blessed underworld powers, and send aid
willingly to the children, for victory!

[*The* CHORUS *retire a little from the tomb;* ORESTES *and* ELECTRA *remain, now on their knees.*]

ORESTES

Father, who died in so unkingly a fashion, make me, I pray you, the master of your house.

ELECTRA

And I, father, have a similar request to make of you: that I may bring ‹death› upon Aegisthus and ‹get a husband›.[104]

ORESTES

For in this way[105] the feasts that are customary among men will be made for you; otherwise, you will be dishonoured,

parlance of early modern surgeons—so as to keep the wound open and allow it to heal naturally by suppuration. See "Hippocrates", *On Wounds in the Head* 14 and *Diseases* 2.47.

104 I have translated Wecklein's restoration of the badly corrupt text; a wish for marriage, which Electra has been disgracefully denied for many years (cf. on 135), seems highly likely in view of 487.

105 i.e. if (but only if) you grant our prayers: only by the restoration of Orestes can Agamemnon hope to receive normal, regular tomb-cult.

ἄτιμος ἐμπύροισι κνισωτοῖς Χθονός.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κἀγὼ χοάς σοι τῆς ἐμῆς παγκληρίας
οἴσω πατρῴων ἐκ δόμων γαμηλίους,
πάντων δὲ πρῶτον τόνδε πρεσβεύσω τάφον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ Γαῖ', ἄνες μοι πατέρ' ἐποπτεῦσαι μάχην.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ Φερσέφασσα, δὸς δέ γ' εὔμορφον κράτος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μέμνησο λούτρων οἷς ἐνοσφίσθης, πάτερ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μέμνησο δ' ἀμφίβληστρον ὡς ἐκαίνισαν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πέδαις δ' ἀχαλκεύτοις ἐθηρεύθης, πάτερ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αἰσχρῶς γε βουλευτοῖσιν ἐν καλύμμασιν.

485 ἐμπύροισι Canter, Auratus: ἐν πυροῖσι M.
490 δέ γ' Hermann: δέ τ' M.
492 ὡς Blomfield: ὦι σ' M.
494 γε Bourdelot: τε M.

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106 Others in Hades, that is. The reference is to festivals such as the Athenian *Genesia*, when sacrifices were made both to the dead and (according to Hesychius γ337) to Earth; see L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Berlin, 1932) 229–230.

107 i.e. my dowry.

while others[106] dine well, on the days when Earth receives savoury burnt sacrifices.

ELECTRA

And I will bring you drink-offerings from the full portion I receive[107] from my father's house at the time of my wedding; and I will honour this tomb above all else.
[*For the next eight lines* ORESTES *and* ELECTRA *are beating the ground with their hands*[108]]

ORESTES

Earth, send me up my father to watch over my fight.

ELECTRA

Phersephassa,[109] give him to us in his beauty[110] and power.

ORESTES

Remember the bath in which you were done to death, father!

ELECTRA

Remember how they devised a new kind of net!

ORESTES

And you were caught in fetters that were not made of metal, father.

ELECTRA

Yes, in the shroud that was part of their shaming plot.

[108] Cf. *Pers.* 683 and Euripides, *Electra* 678, *Trojan Women* 1306.

[109] The Attic name of Persephone, queen of the underworld, was Φερρέφαττα, but tragedy regularly modifies the distinctively Attic double consonants -ρρ- and -ττ- to -ρσ- and -σσ-.

[110] i.e. as he was before he was disfigured by wounding and mutilation.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἆρ᾽ ἐξεγείρῃ τοῖσδ᾽ ὀνείδεσιν, πάτερ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἆρ᾽ ὀρθὸν αἴρεις φίλτατον τὸ σὸν κάρα;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἤτοι Δίκην ἴαλλε σύμμαχον φίλοις
ἢ τὰς ὁμοίας ἀντίδος λαβὰς λαβεῖν,
εἴπερ κρατηθείς γ᾽ ἀντινικῆσαι θέλεις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ τῆσδ᾽ ἄκουσον λοισθίου βοῆς, πάτερ·
ἰδὼν νεοσσοὺς τούσδ᾽ ἐφημένους τάφῳ
οἴκτιρε θῆλυν ἄρσενός θ᾽ ὁμοῦ γόον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ μὴ ᾽ξαλείψῃς σπέρμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε·
οὕτω γὰρ οὐ τέθνηκας οὐδέ περ θανών.
{παῖδες γὰρ ἀνδρὶ κληδόνες σωτήριοι
θανόντι· φελλοὶ δ᾽ ὡς ἄγουσι δίκτυον,
τὸν ἐκ βυθοῦ κλωστῆρα σῴζοντες λίνου.}

498 λαβὰς Canter: βλάβας M.
502 γόον Pauw: γόνον M. 505–7 del. Ludwig: Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 2.23.141.3, cites a version of the passage and ascribes it to Sophocles.

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111 A metaphor from wrestling.

112 This sententious passage is inappropriate in a scene of short, impassioned appeals, and spoils both the symmetry between the two speakers and (by explaining what needs no explanation) the impact of the bold paradox of 504. It is quoted by Clem-

ORESTES

Are you awakened by the thought of that disgrace, father?

ELECTRA

Are you raising your beloved head erect?

ORESTES

Either send Justice to be an ally to your loved ones, or grant that we may secure the same grip in which you were taken,[111] if after your defeat you indeed wish to win the return match.

ELECTRA

And hear this final cry too, father: see these nestlings perched on your tomb, and take pity on the lament of the female and also of the male.

ORESTES

And do not wipe out this Pelopid seed; for then, even though dead, you will not have perished. {For to a dead man his children are the fame that preserves him; like corks they bear the net up, keeping safe the spun flax that stretches up from the depths.}[112]

ent of Alexandria (see textual note) in a curiously different form, the first sentence being given as παῖδες δὲ ἀνδρὶ κατθανόντι (κατ' αἶαν ὄντι cod., corr. Dobree) κληδόνες γεγάασι, and he attributes the passage to Sophocles (an ascription which all recent editors of Sophoclean fragments have by implication rejected). Since γεγάασι (an epic form not otherwise found in tragedy at all) could not stand in spoken iambics yet can hardly be accounted for as a corruption, the most likely explanation of the presence of the lines in our text, as Garvie suggests, is that they were originally a lyric passage written as an illustrative parallel in the margin, later copied into the text and then adapted into iambic verses.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄκου᾽· ὑπὲρ σοῦ τοι τάδ᾽ ἔστ᾽ ὀδύρματα,
αὐτὸς δὲ σῴζῃ τόνδε τιμήσας λόγον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἀμεμφῆ τόνδ᾽ ἐτείνατον λόγον,
τίμημα τύμβου τῆς ἀνοιμώκτου τύχης·
τὰ δ᾽ ἄλλ᾽, ἐπειδὴ δρᾶν κατώρθωσαι φρενί,
ἔρδοις ἂν ἤδη δαίμονος πειρώμενος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔσται. πυθέσθαι δ᾽ οὐδέν ἐστ᾽ ἔξω δρόμου
πόθεν χοὰς ἔπεμψεν, ἐκ τίνος λόγου,
μεθύστερον τιμῶσ᾽ ἀνήκεστον πάθος.
θανόντι δ᾽ οὐ φρονοῦντι δειλαία χάρις
ἐπέμπετ᾽· οὐκ ἔχοιμ᾽ ἂν εἰκάσαι τόδε.
τὰ δῶρα μείω δ᾽ ἐστὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας·
τὰ πάντα γάρ τις ἐκχέας ἀνθ᾽ αἵματος
ἑνός—μάτην ὁ μόχθος· ὧδ᾽ ἔχει λόγος.
θέλοντι δ᾽, εἴπερ οἶσθ᾽, ἐμοὶ φράσον τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἶδ᾽, ὦ τέκνον, παρῆ γάρ· ἔκ τ᾽ ὀνειράτων
καὶ νυκτιπλάγκτων δειμάτων πεπαλμένη
χοὰς ἔπεμψε τάσδε δύσθεος γυνή.

510 ἀμεμφῆ τόνδ(ε) Canter, ἐτείνατον Hermann: ἀμόμφητονδετινατὸν M. 517 θανόντι Σ^{M}: θανοῦντι M.
518 τόδε M^{pc}: τάδε M^{ac}.
519 μείω Turnebus, cf. Σ^{M}: μέσω M.
523 παρῆ Porson: πάρει M (ει in an erasure): παρῆς $\gamma\rho M^{s}$.

ELECTRA

Hear us; they are for your sake, we tell you, these laments of ours, and by respecting our words you gain security for yourself.

[*ORESTES and ELECTRA rise to their feet.*]

CHORUS

Well, the two of you cannot be blamed for addressing him at length, paying recompense to his tomb for the time it lay unmourned.[113] Now, since you[114] are resolved in your mind to act, you can make trial of fortune and do the rest of the job.

ORESTES

It shall be so. But it certainly isn't irrelevant to ask how she came to send those drink-offerings and for what reason, in belated recompense for a wrong beyond remedy. For a dead man, without consciousness, it was a wretched favour to send; I can't think of anything to compare it to. And the gifts do not match the crime. Pour out all you have in atonement for one man's blood—and your work is wasted: so the saying goes. I'd be pleased for you to tell me this, if you know.

CHORUS

I do know, my child, because I was there. That godless woman sent these drink-offerings because she was shaken by dreams and wandering terrors of the night.

113 lit. "its unmourned fortune", i.e. the (mis)fortune of being unmourned.

114 Addressing Orestes only (the verbs in this sentence are singular).

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἦ καὶ πέπυσθε τοὔναρ, ὥστ' ὀρθῶς φράσαι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τεκεῖν δράκοντ' ἔδοξεν, ὡς αὐτὴ λέγει—

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὗτοι μάταιον ἂν τόδ' ὄψανον πέλοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐν σπαργάνοις τε παιδὸς ὁρμίσαι δίκην.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τίνος βορᾶς χρῄζοντα, νεογενὲς δάκος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αὐτὴ προσέσχε μαστὸν ἐν τὠνείρατι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ πῶς ἄτρωτον οὖθαρ ἦν ὑπὸ στύγους;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὥστ' ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβον αἵματος σπάσαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ ποῖ τελευτᾷ καὶ καρανοῦται λόγος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡ δ' ἐξ ὕπνου κέκλαγγεν ἐπτοημένη,
πολλοὶ δ' ἀνῆθον ἐκτυφλωθέντες σκότῳ
λαμπτῆρες ἐν δόμοισι δεσποίνης χάριν.

534 and 528 interchanged by West.
534 ἂν τόδ' ὄψανον πέλοι Martin: ἀνδρὸς ὄψανον πέλει M.
529 σπαργάνοις τε Weil: σπαργάνοισι M.
530 νεογενὲς Turnebus: νεορενὲς M.

ORESTES

Did you learn what the dream was, so as to be able to tell it accurately?

CHORUS

As she herself says, she imagined she gave birth to a snake—

ORESTES

That vision is not likely to have come for nothing!

CHORUS

– and nestled it in swaddling-clothes, like a baby.

ORESTES

What food did it want, this deadly new-born creature?

CHORUS

In her dream, she herself offered her breast to it.

ORESTES

Then surely her teat was wounded by the loathsome beast?

CHORUS

So that in her milk it drew off a clot of blood.

ORESTES

And where does the story reach its end and culmination?

CHORUS

She cried out in terror in her sleep, and many house-lights which had been extinguished into blind darkness blazed up again for the sake of our mistress. Then she sent these

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531 *μαστὸν* Blomfield: *μαζὸν* M.
532 *οὖθαρ ἦν* Pauw: *οὐχαρην* M.
532 *στύγους* Schütz, cf. Σ^{M} *τοῦ μισητοῦ θηρίου*: *στύγος* M.
535 *κέκλαγγεν* H. L. Ahrens: *κέκλαγεν* M.
536 *ἀνῆθον* Valckenaer, cf. Σ^{M} *ἀνέλαμψαν*: *ἀνῆλθον* M.

πέμπει δ' ἔπειτα τάσδε κηδείους χοάς,
ἄκος τομαῖον ἐλπίσασα πημάτων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' εὔχομαι Γῇ τῇδε καὶ πατρὸς τάφῳ
τοὔνειρον εἶναι τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ τελεσφόρον·
κρινῶ δέ τοί νιν ὥστε συγκόλλως ἔχειν.
εἰ γὰρ τὸν αὐτὸν χῶρον ἐκλιπὼν ἐμοὶ
οὔφις †επᾶσασπαργανηπλείζετο†
καὶ μαστὸν ἀμφέχασκ' ἐμὸν θρεπτήριον,
θρόμβῳ δ' ἔμειξεν αἵματος φίλον γάλα,
ἡ δ' ἀμφὶ τάρβει τῷδ' ἐπώμωξεν πάθει,
δεῖ τοί νιν, ὡς ἔθρεψεν ἔκπαγλον τέρας,
θανεῖν βιαίως· ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς δ' ἐγὼ
κτείνω νιν, ὡς τοὔνειρον ἐννέπει τόδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τερασκόπον δὴ τῶνδέ σ' αἱροῦμαι πέρι,
γένοιτο δ' οὕτως. τἄλλα δ' ἐξηγοῦ φίλοις,
τοὺς μέν τι ποιεῖν, τοὺς δὲ μή τι δρᾶν λέγων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἁπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος· τήνδε μὲν στείχειν ἔσω,
αἰνῶ δὲ κρύπτειν τάσδε συνθήκας ἐμάς,

538 δ' Bourdelot: τ' M. 542 συγκόλλως Victorius, cf. Σ^{M} συνημμένως: συσκόλλως M.

543 ἐκλιπὼν Blomfield: ἐκλείπων M^{pc}: ἐκλείπειν M^{ac}.

544 οὔφις Porson: οὐφεῖσ M.

544 επᾶσασπαργανηπλείζετο M: ἐφ' ἁμὰ (ἐπ' ἀμὰ Klausen) σπάργαν' Wecklein, then ἡρπαλίζετο Franz: ἐμοῖσι σπαργάνοις Porson, then εἱλίσσετο Faehse.

drink-offerings of mourning, hoping for a decisive cure[115] for her troubles.

ORESTES

Well, I pray to the Earth beneath us and to my father's tomb that this dream may be fulfilled in me. See, I shall interpret it so that it fits exactly. If the snake came out of the same place as I did,[116] and found a welcoming home in my swaddling-clothes,[117] and opened its mouth around the breast that nurtured me, and made a clot of blood mingle with the loving milk, and she screamed out in fear at the experience—then, you can see, as she nursed this monstrous portent, so she is destined to die by violence. I become the serpent and kill her: so this dream declares.

CHORUS

I certainly choose you as my diviner in this matter; may it be as you say! Now explain the rest to your friends, telling this one to take action and that one to take no action.

ORESTES

What I have to say is simple. My sister here[118] is to go inside; and I bid you keep secret this agreement with me, so

115 lit. "a cure by cutting, a surgical cure".

116 i.e. Clytaemestra's womb.

117 An approximate rendering (based on the conjectures of Klausen/Wecklein and Franz) of the general sense of a very corrupt line.

118 lit. "this woman".

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545 *μαστὸν* Elmsley: *μασθὸν* M.

547 *τάρβει* Porson: *ταρβί* M.

551 *δὴ* Kirchhoff: *δὲ* M.

553 *μέν* Auratus or Portus: *δ' ἐν* (apparently) M: *δ' ἔν* M^{s}.

ὡς ἂν δόλῳ κτείναντες ἄνδρα τίμιον
δόλῳ γε καὶ ληφθῶσιν, ἐν ταὐτῷ βρόχῳ
θανόντες, ἢ καὶ Λοξίας ἐφήμισεν,
ἄναξ Ἀπόλλων, μάντις ἀψευδὴς τὸ πρίν.
ξένῳ γὰρ εἰκώς, παντελῆ σαγὴν ἔχων,
ἥξω σὺν ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἐφ' ἑρκείους πύλας
Πυλάδῃ—ξένος δὲ καὶ δορύξενος δόμων—
ἄμφω δὲ φωνὴν ἥσομεν Παρνησσίδα,
γλώσσης αὐτὴν Φωκίδος μιμουμένω.
καὶ δὴ θυρωρῶν οὔτις ἂν φαιδρᾷ φρενὶ
δέξαιτ', ἐπειδὴ δαιμονᾷ δόμος κακοῖς·
μενοῦμεν οὕτως, ὥστ' ἐπεικάζειν τινὰ
δόμους παραστείχοντα καὶ τάδ' ἐννέπειν·
"τί δὴ πύλαισι τὸν ἱκέτην ἀπείργεται
Αἴγισθος, εἴπερ οἶδεν ἔνδημος παρών;"
εἰ δ' οὖν ἀμείψω βαλὸν ἑρκείων πυλῶν
κἀκεῖνον ἐν θρόνοισιν εὑρήσω πατρός,
ἢ καὶ μολὼν ἔπειτά μοι κατὰ στόμα
ἐρεῖ, σάφ' ἴσθι, καὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς λαβών,
πρὶν αὐτὸν εἰπεῖν "ποδαπὸς ὁ ξένος;" νεκρὸν
θήσω, ποδώκει περιβαλὼν χαλκεύματι·

556 *κτείναντες* Robortello, Turnebus: *κτείναντας* M.
557 *γε* Pauw: *τε* M. 562 *δὲ* Meineke: *τὲ* M.
563 *ἥσομεν* Turnebus: *οἴσομεν* M.
566 *δέξαιτ'* Turnebus: *λέξαιτ'* M.
568 *δόμους* Boissonade: *δόμοις* M.
571 *βαλὸν ἑρκείων* Stanley: *βαλὸν ἑρκίον* M^{s}: *βαλῶν ἕρκειον* M. 574 *λαβὼν* West: *βαλεῖν* M.

that, having killed a man of renown by trickery, so too they may be trapped by trickery and perish in the same snare, in the way that has been foretold by Loxias, Lord Apollo, a prophet who has never lied in the past. In the guise of a traveller from abroad, with a full set of baggage, I will come to the front door with this man, Pylades—he is bound to this house by hospitality and alliance; both of us will speak with an accent from Parnassus, imitating the sound of the Phocian dialect.[119] Suppose that none of the doorkeepers will be cheerfully willing to admit us—after all, the house is possessed by evil forces; then we will wait like this, so that anyone passing by the palace will guess what we are[120] and say, "Why, pray, does Aegisthus shut his door to the suppliant, if he is in town and knows about it?" Well, anyway, if I do get past the threshold of the front door and find *him* on my father's throne, or if he arrives home and then speaks to me face to face,[121] then I assure you, as soon as I set eyes on him, before he can say "where's the visitor from?" I'll make a corpse of him, draping him round

[119] In fact, when the pair come to the door, only Orestes speaks, and he speaks normal tragic Attic (as does everyone else in tragedy, including those who in "real" life would have known little or no Greek of any kind); this sentence serves as an instruction to the audience to *imagine* that he is speaking Phocian. Much of Mount Parnassus was in Phocian territory.

[120] i.e. travellers from abroad hoping to be given hospitality (and perhaps also protection from enemies, whence ἱκέτην "suppliant" in 569); the idea is that Aegisthus will eventually be forced to admit them for fear of getting a bad name.

[121] i.e. grants me an audience (as is presently explained, he will not be given a chance to actually speak).

φόνου δ' Ἐρινὺς οὐχ ὑπεσπανισμένη
ἄκρατον αἷμα πίεται τρίτην πόσιν.
νῦν οὖν σὺ μὲν φύλασσε τἀν οἴκῳ καλῶς,
ὅπως ἂν ἀρτίκολλα συμβαίνῃ τάδε·
ὑμῖν δ' ἐπαινῶ γλῶσσαν εὔφημον φέρειν,
σιγᾶν θ' ὅπου δεῖ καὶ λέγειν τὰ καίρια.
τὰ δ' ἄλλα τούτῳ δεῦρ' ἐποπτεῦσαι λέγω
ξιφηφόρους ἀγῶνας ὀρθώσαντί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α πολλὰ μὲν γᾶ τρέφει
δεινὰ δειμάτων ἄχη,
πόντιαί τ' ἀγκάλαι
κνωδάλων ἀνταίων
βρύουσι· βλάπτουσι καὶ πεδαίχμιοι

579 νῦν Erfurdt: σὺν' M^{ac}: σὺ M^{pc}.
585 γᾶ Porson (γὴ *m*): γὰρ M.
586 δειμάτων Heath: καὶ δειμάτων M.
589 βρύουσι Hermann: βροτοῖσι πλάθουσι M (πλάθουσι del. Schwenck).
589 βλάπτουσι Butler: βλαστοῦσι M $^{i}\Sigma^{M}$.

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122 lit. "swift-footed piece of metalwork".

123 Another allusion to the third libation (see notes on *Supp.* 26, *Ag.* 246, 1385–7)—which was, however, of wine *mixed with water* (Diodorus Siculus 4.3.4). The Fury's *second* draught was, of course, the murder of Agamemnon; her *first* is probably to be identified with the murder and butchery of the children of Thyestes (cf. 1065–76 and *Ag.* 1090–1129, 1186–1241).

my swift sword;[122] and the Fury, who has had no shortage of gore, will drink a third draught of unmixed blood.[123] Now, then, [*to* ELECTRA] you take good care of matters inside the house, so that this may all work out and fit well together; to you [*to the* CHORUS] my advice is to keep your tongue saying only the right things—to stay silent when appropriate and to say what suits the occasion; and I charge this one here [*indicating the pillar of Hermes in front of the palace*][124] to watch over the rest and see that all goes right in the contest into which I take my sword.

[*ELECTRA goes into the palace;* ORESTES *and* PYLADES *go off to prepare their disguises.*]

CHORUS

The earth breeds many beings
that cause terrible, fearful suffering,
and the bosom of the deep
teems with hostile monsters;
torches flaming on high,

[124] That the power to whom Orestes here entrusts his fortunes is Hermes was convincingly argued by A. F. Garvie, *BICS* 17 (1970) 85–86. Hermes is the god of contests (ἐναγώνιος: cf. Aesch. fr. 384; Pindar, *Pythian* 2.10; Aristophanes, *Wealth* 1161–2), and he is appealed to at 727–9 in a close echo of the present passage. Others have taken the power addressed here to be Apollo or the spirit of Agamemnon.

λαμπάδες πεδάοροι
πτανά τε καὶ πεδοβάμονα· κἀνεμόεντ' ἂν
αἰγίδων φράσαις κότον·

ἀντ. α ἀλλ' ὑπέρτολμον ἀν-
δρὸς φρόνημα τίς λέγοι
καὶ γυναικῶν φρεσὶν
τλαμόνων παντόλμους
ἔρωτας, ἄταισι συννόμους βροτῶν;
ξυζύγους δ' ὁμαυλίας
θηλυκρατὴς ἀπέρωπος ἔρως παρανικᾷ
κνωδάλων τε καὶ βροτῶν.

στρ. β ἴστω δ' ὅστις οὐχ ὑπόπτερος
φροντίσιν, δαεὶς
τὰν ἁ παιδολύ-
μας τάλαινα Θεστιὰς μήσατο

590 πεδάοροι Portus (πέδουροι conj. M^{s}): πεδαμαροι M.
591 κἀνεμόεντ' ἂν Blomfield: κἀνεμοέντων M.
592 φράσαις Blomfield: φράσαι M.
597 παντόλμους Klausen: καὶ παντόλμους M.

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125 Presumably comets and meteors. Interest in these phenomena had been aroused a few years earlier (467 BC) when the appearance of a spectacular comet was followed by the fall of a meteorite, "big enough to make a cart-load", at Aegospotami on

between sky and earth,[125] do injury
to winged and footed creatures; and one might also
speak
of the windy wrath of hurricanes—

but who can describe
the audacious pride of man
and the passions of women's
daring minds, passions that will stop
at nothing and are partners in human ruin?
The homes that couples share
are evilly conquered by the reckless passion that
overpowers the female,[126]
both among beasts and among men.

Anyone may know this, if his thoughts
do not fly away with him, by learning
of the plan contrived with forethought
by the cruel one who destroyed her child,

the Hellespont (Aristotle, *Meteorologica* 334b31–335a1; *Parian Marble, FGrH* 239 A 57; Pliny, *Natural History* 2.149–150; Plutarch, *Lysander* 12). No human casualties are reported in our sources, but this passage, if its text is correctly restored, may be evidence that some animals were killed.

[126] The unique compound θηλυκρατής can also be interpreted in other ways equally relevant to the immediate and/or the wider context, such as "that empowers the female" or "of powerful females".

πυρδαὴς γυνὰ πρόνοι-
αν, καταίθουσα παιδὸς δαφοινὸν
δαλὸν ἥλικ', ἐπεὶ μολὼν
ματρόθεν κελάδησε,
ξύμμετρόν τε διαὶ βίου
μοιρόκραντον ἐς ἦμαρ.

ἀντ. β ἄλλαν δὴ 'στιν ἐν λόγοις στυγεῖν,
φοινίαν κόραν,
ἅτ' ἐχθρῶν ὑπαὶ
φῶτ' ἀπώλεσεν φίλον, Κρητικοῖς
χρυσεοδμήτοισιν ὅρ-
μοις πιθήσασα, δώροισι Μίνω,
Νῖσον ἀθανάτας τριχὸς
νοσφίσασ' ἀπροβούλῳ

607 πυρδαὴς Σ^{M}, γυνὰ Page: πυρδαῆ τινα M.
608 καταίθουσα Canter: κ'αἰθοῦσα M.
611 διαὶ Canter: διὰ M.
612 μοιρόκραντον M^{s} Σ^{M}: μοιρόκραντος M.
612 ἐς Turnebus: δ' ἐς M.
613 ἄλλαν Portus, Canter: ἀλλὰ M.
613 δὴ 'στιν Enger: δή τιν' M.
614 κόραν Merkel: Σκύλλαν M.
615 ἀπώλεσεν Robortello: ἀπόλεσεν M.
618 δώροισι Ald.: δόροισι M.
620 ἀπροβούλῳ Page: ἀπροβούλως M.

the daughter of Thestius,[127] the woman who lit the fire,
burning up the red brand
that was coeval with her son, ever since
he had cried when he came from her womb,
and that kept measure with his life all its length
till the day decreed by fate.

There is another one in story fit to be loathed,
the murderous maiden,[128]
who caused the death of a man of close kin
at the hands of enemies, yielding to the persuasion
of a Cretan necklace
fashioned of gold, the gift of Minos,
and robbing Nisus of his lock
of immortality—the woman with a bitch's heart![129]—

127 Althaea, the mother of Meleager. When her son was a week old, she was told by the Fates that he would die when the log then burning on the hearth was consumed; she seized the log and kept it in a chest. But when she heard that her brothers had been killed by Meleager in a quarrel over the Calydonian boar, she threw the log into the fire, and when it was burnt up Meleager, far away, almost instantly died. See Bacchylides 5.93–154; [Apollodorus], *Library* 1.8.1–3; Pausanias 10.31.4.

128 Scylla, daughter of Nisus king of Megara. When her city was besieged by Minos of Crete, she betrayed it to him by cutting off the purple lock on her father's head (in some versions it is a single hair), without which he (or, as others tell the story, the city) could not survive. In other accounts (all much later; the fullest are in the pseudo-Virgilian *Ciris* and Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8.6–151) Scylla is in love with Minos; here, in the absence of any pre-Aeschylean version of the myth, we cannot tell whether we are to understand the golden necklace as a love-gift or a bribe.

129 A play on Scylla's name, which means "bitch-pup".

πνέονθ' ἁ κυνόφρων ὕπνῳ·
κιγχάνει δέ νιν Ἑρμᾶς.

κακῶν δὲ πρεσβεύεται τὸ Λήμνιον
στρ. γ λόγῳ· γοᾶται δὲ δήμοθεν κατά-
πτυστον· ᾔκασεν δέ τις
τὸ δεινὸν αὖ Λημνίοισι πήμασιν.
θεοστυγήτῳ δ' ἄγει
βροτοῖς ἀτιμωθὲν οἴχεται γένος·
σέβει γὰρ οὔτις τὸ δυσφιλὲς θεοῖς.
τί τῶνδ' οὐκ ἐνδίκως ἀγείρω;

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐπεμνασάμαν ἀμειλίχων
ἀντ. γ πόνων, ἄκαιρ' οὐδὲ δυσφιλὲς γαμή-
λευμ' ἀπεύχετον δόμοις

622 *νιν* Blomfield: *μιν* M.
631–8 transposed by Preuss to precede 623–630.
632 *δημόθεν* Hartung: *δὴ ποθει* (sscr. *-ι*) M.
635 *ἄγει* Auratus: *ἄχει* M.
636 *βροτοῖς* Wilamowitz: *βροτῶν* M.
623 *ἐπεμνασάμαν* (*-ησάμην*) Heath: *ἐπεμνήσαμεν* M (*-ά-* sscr. M^s).
624 *ἄκαιρ' οὐδὲ* Stinton: *ἀκαίρως δὲ* M.

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130 To take him to Hades (cf. *Odyssey* 24.1–10). Since *νιν* can be feminine as well as masculine, there may also be an allusion to the subsequent fate of Scylla herself, who in some of the later accounts (e.g. [Apollodorus], *Library* 3.15.8; Pausanias 2.34.7) was drowned by Minos as punishment for her treachery and parricide.

as he drew breath in sleep, having taken no precautions;
Hermes laid hands on him.[130]

Among crimes, that of Lemnos[131] takes first place
in story; it is lamented by the people[132]
as an abomination, and men have likened
any later horror to the woes of Lemnos.[133]
Because of their pollution, loathed by the gods,
the race has disappeared, dishonoured by all men;[134]
for no one respects what the gods hate.
Of these tales I have collected, which is not rightly
cited?

And since I have made mention of such pitiless
sorrows, neither is it inappropriate ‹to speak of›[135]
a hateful wedded union,[136] an abomination to the house,

131 The women of Lemnos, led by Hypsipyle, murdered their husbands and afterwards, when the Argonauts came to the island, took them as lovers.

132 The people of Lemnos, that is, doubtless during the great Lemnian fire-festival which was said to commemorate, and atone for, this crime; see W. Burkert, *CQ* 20 (1970) 1–16, and H. Lloyd-Jones, *Gnomon* 85 (1993) 7.

133 "It has become customary throughout Greece for all evil deeds to be called 'Lemnian'" (Herodotus 6.138.4).

134 This may refer to the expulsion from Lemnos of the grandchildren of the Lemnian women and the Argonauts (Herodotus 4.145.2).

135 A verb (either first-person or infinitive) of approximately this meaning is missing from the sentence; see West, *Studies* 248–9.

136 The union of Clytaemestra and Aegisthus.

γυναικοβούλους τε μήτιδας †φρενῶν†
ἐπ᾽ ἀνδρὶ τευχεσφόρῳ,
†ἐπ᾽ ἀνδρὶ δηΐοις ἐπικότω σέβας†.
τίω δ᾽ ἀθέρμαντον ἑστίαν δόμων
γυναικείαν τ᾽ ἄτολμον αἰχμᾶν.

στρ. δ
τόδ᾽ ἄγχι πλευμόνων ξίφος
διανταίαν ὀξυπευκὲς οὐτᾷ
διαὶ Δίκας—τὸ μὴ θέμις—
λαξ πέδον πατουμένας,
τὸ πᾶν Διὸς σέβας παρεκ-
βάντος οὐ θεμιστῶς.

ἀντ. δ
Δίκας δ᾽ ἐρείδεται πυθμήν,
προχαλκεύει δ᾽ Αἶσα φασγανουργός·
τέκνον δ᾽ ἐπεισφέρει δόμοις
αἱμάτων παλαιτέρων
τίνειν μύσος χρόνῳ κλυτὰ
βυσσόφρων Ἐρινύς.

626 *φρενῶν* M: *θροεῖν* or *φράσω* West.
628 perh. e.g. ‹ὃς ἔσκε› (West) λαοῖς (Paley) *ἐπίσκοπον* (*-σκόπῳ* Martin) *σέβας*. 629 *τίω* Portus: *τίων* M.
630 *τ᾽* Hermann: om. M.
639 *τόδ᾽* Young: *τὸ δ᾽* M.
641 *οὐτᾷ* Hermann: *σοῦται* M.
642 *θέμις* H. L. Ahrens: *θέμις γὰρ οὐ* M.
643 *πατουμένας* H. L. Ahrens: *πατούμενον* M.
644–5 *παρεκβάντος* Auratus: *παρεκβάντες* M.
647 *προχαλκεύει* Jacob: *προσχαλκεύει* M.

and the crafty plotting of a woman
against a man who bore arms,
‹who was a revered guardian to his people›.[137]
I honour a domestic hearth that is not made hot[138]
and a woman whom power does not make audacious.

This sword[139] pierces,
sharp and penetrating, right to the lungs,
because Justice, most wrongfully,
is trampled underfoot to the ground,
when someone, against all right, has utterly
flouted the majesty of Zeus.

But the foundations of Justice are firmly set,
and the swordsmith Destiny is preparing the weapon;
and a child is being imported into the house,
to pay at last for the stain
of older deeds of blood, by the far-famed,
deep-thinking Fury.[140]

137 The text of this line is very corrupt, and the first two words, *ἐπ᾽ ἀνδρὶ*, may have been wrongly repeated from the previous line; I translate the very tentative restoration offered in the textual note. 138 By dangerous passions such as made Althaea burn the fatal brand (604–9) or Clytaemestra embark on her affair with Aegisthus (cf. *Ag.* 1435–6). 139 The figurative "sword" is the pain of beholding the murderers seemingly triumphant; cf. 184, 380–1, *Eum.* 135–6, 155–161.

140 The epithets *κλυτὰ βυσσόφρων* "far-famed, deep-thinking" seem to play on the name *Κλυται-μήστρα* "famous plotter".

649–650 *δόμοις* H. L. Ahrens (*οἴκοις* Σ^{M}), *αἱμάτων* Σ^{M}: *διμασε δωμάτων* M. 651 *τίνειν* Lachmann: *τίνει* M.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

παῖ παῖ, θύρας ἄκουσον ἑρκείας κτύπον.
τίς ἔνδον, ὦ παῖ; παῖ μάλ' αὖ· τίς ἐν δόμοις;
τρίτον τόδ' ἐκπέραμα δωμάτων καλῶ,
εἴπερ φιλόξεν' ἐστὶν Αἰγίσθου διαί.

ΘΥΡΩΡΟΣ

εἶέν, ἀκούω. ποδαπὸς ὁ ξένος; πόθεν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄγγελλε τοῖσι κυρίοισι δωμάτων,
πρὸς οὕσπερ ἥκω καὶ φέρω καινοὺς λόγους.
τάχυνε δ', ὡς καὶ νυκτὸς ἅρμ' ἐπείγεται
σκοτεινόν, ὥρα δ' ἐμπόρους μεθιέναι
ἄγκυραν ἐν δόμοισι παυδόκοις ξένων.
ἐξελθέτω τις δωμάτων τελεσφόρος,
γυνή γ' ἄπαρχος—ἄνδρα δ' εὐπρεπέστερον·
αἰδὼς γὰρ ἐν λέσχαισιν οὖσ' ἐπαργέμους
λόγους τίθησιν· εἶπε θαρσήσας ἀνὴρ
πρὸς ἄνδρα κἀσήμηνεν ἐμφανὲς τέκμαρ.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ξένοι, λέγοιτ' ἂν εἴ τι δεῖ· πάρεστι γὰρ

654 αὖ· τίς Schwerdt: αὖθις M.
664 γ' ἄπαρχος H. L. Ahrens: ταπαρχος M: τόπαρχος M^s.
664 δ' Turnebus: τ' M.
665 λέσχαισιν Emperius, οὖσ' Bothe: λεχθεῖσιν οὐκ M.

[*ORESTES and PYLADES re-enter, disguised as travellers from Phocis. ORESTES goes up to the palace door and begins to knock loudly and repeatedly.*]

ORESTES

Boy, boy! Can you hear the sound of the front door? Who's in there, boy? Boy, I say again! Who's at home? This is the third time I'm calling for someone to come out of the house, if Aegisthus makes it a hospitable one.

DOORKEEPER [*behind the door, not opening it*]

All right, all right, I can hear you. Where's the visitor from? Where, I say?

ORESTES

Take a message to the masters of the house; I've come with news for them. And hurry, because night's dark chariot is already advancing rapidly, and it's time for travellers to drop anchor in houses that make all visitors welcome. Let someone come out who has authority in the house, the woman who is its mistress—but it would be more fitting for a man to come. When there's bashfulness in a conversation,[141] it makes what is said obscure. A man speaking to a man is confident and uses words that reveal his meaning clearly.

[*The door opens and CLYTAEMESTRA appears, with attendants*]

CLYTAEMESTRA

Strangers, please tell me anything you need. We have here

141 As there was almost bound to be, on both sides, in a conversation between a man and a woman previously unknown to each other.

ὁποῖάπερ δόμοισι τοῖσδ' ἐπεικότα,
καὶ θερμὰ λουτρὰ καὶ πόνων θελκτηρία
στρωμνή, δικαίων τ' ὀμμάτων παρουσία.
εἰ δ' ἄλλο πρᾶξαι δεῖ τι βουλιώτερον,
ἀνδρῶν τόδ' ἐστὶν ἔργον, οἷς κοινώσομεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ξένος μέν εἰμι Δαυλιεὺς ἐκ Φωκέων·
στείχοντα δ' αὐτόφορτον οἰκείᾳ σαγῇ
εἰς Ἄργος, ὥσπερ δεῦρ' ἀπεζύγην πόδας,
ἀγνὼς πρὸς ἀγνῶτ' εἶπε συμβαλὼν ἀνήρ,
ἐξιστορήσας καὶ σαφηνισθεὶς ὁδόν,
Στροφίος ὁ Φωκεύς (πεύθομαι γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ)·
"ἐπείπερ ἄλλως, ὦ ξέν', εἰς Ἄργος κίεις,
πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας πανδίκως μεμνημένος
τεθνεῶτ' Ὀρέστην εἰπέ, μηδαμῶς λάθῃ.
εἴτ' οὖν κομίζειν δόξα νικήσει φίλων,
εἴτ' οὖν μέτοικον, εἰς τὸ πᾶν αἰεὶ ξένον,
θάπτειν, ἐφετμὰς τάσδε πόρθμευσον πάλιν.
νῦν γὰρ λέβητος χαλκέου πλευρώματα
σποδὸν κέκευθεν ἀνδρὸς εὖ κεκλαυμένου."
τοσαῦτ' ἀκούσας εἶπον. εἰ δὲ τυγχάνω
τοῖς κυρίοισι καὶ προσήκουσιν λέγων
οὐκ οἶδα· τὸν τεκόντα δ' εἰκὸς εἰδέναι.

675 οἰκείᾳ σαγῇ (σάγῃ) Turnebus: οἰκίαισάγῃ M.
678 σαφηνισθεὶς Heimsoeth, cf. Σ^{M} μαθών: σαφηνίσας M.

just the kinds of things that befit a house like this—hot baths, good bedding to soothe away your fatigue, and the company of honest faces. If anything else needs to be done that calls for more deliberation, then that is a job for men, and we will communicate it to them.

ORESTES

I am a stranger here, from Daulia[142] in Phocis. I was travelling to Argos, carrying my own luggage on my own shoulders, just as I was when I arrived here,[143] when a man I met said to me—neither of us knew the other—after asking and being told where I was going (he was Strophius the Phocian, I learned his name in our conversation): "Since you're bound for Argos anyway, sir, please remember carefully to tell his parents that Orestes is dead; don't forget on any account. Whether it turns out that the preferred decision in his family is to bring him home, or whether it is to bury him as a foreign resident, a permanent and perpetual alien, please convey back here their instructions about this. The walls of a bronze urn already enfold the ashes of the man, who has been well wept over." That's all he said to me, and I've now said it too. Whether I'm actually speaking to the appropriate people, his relatives, I don't know, but it's proper that his father should know the news.[144]

142 Daulia (or Daulis) was in eastern Phocis, not far from the Boeotian border and about 10 km west of Chaeronea.

143 lit. "just as I unyoked my feet here".

144 *τὸν τεκόντα δ' εἰκὸς εἰδέναι* could also be taken (with savage irony) to mean "but probably you know who his father is".

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οἳ ᾽γώ, κατ᾽ ἄκρας †ἐνπᾶς ὡς† πορθούμεθα.
ὦ δυσπάλαιστε τῶνδε δωμάτων Ἀρά,
ὡς πόλλ᾽ ἐπωπᾷς κἀκποδὼν εὖ κείμενα·
τόξοις πρόσωθεν εὐσκόποις χειρουμένη
φίλων ἀποψιλοῖς με τὴν παναθλίαν.
καὶ νῦν Ὀρέστης—ἦν γὰρ εὐβούλως ἔχων,
ἔξω κομίζων ὀλεθρίου πηλοῦ πόδα·
νῦν δ᾽ ἤπερ ἐν δόμοισι βακχείας κακῆς
ἰατρὸς ἐλπίς ἦν, προδοῦσαν ἔγγραφε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ξένοισιν ὧδ᾽ εὐδαίμοσιν
κεδνῶν ἕκατι πραγμάτων ἂν ἤθελον
γνωτὸς γενέσθαι καὶ ξενωθῆναι· τί γὰρ
ξένου ξένοισίν ἐστιν εὐμενέστερον;
πρὸς δυσσεβείας δ᾽ ἦν ἐμοὶ τόδ᾽ ἐν φρεσίν,
τοιόνδε πρᾶγμα μὴ καρανῶσαι φίλοις,
καταινέσαντα καὶ κατεξενωμένον.

691 *ἐνπᾶς ὡς* M (*πᾶσ᾽* M^{s}): *εἶπας ὡς* Bamberger: *παντελῶς* Blaydes.

697 *κομίζων* Σ^{M}: *νομίζων* M.

698 *κακῆς* Portus: *καλῆς* M.

699 *προδοῦσαν* Pauw, *ἔγγραφε* Stephanus (*τάξον αὐτὴν ἀφανισθεῖσαν* Σ^{M}): *παροῦσαν ἐγγράφει* M.

704 δ᾽ *ἦν* Auratus, Portus: *ἦν* M.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Ah me, we are completely, utterly ruined![145] Curse of this house, so hard to wrestle free of, how much you keep your eye on, even when it's placed well out of the way! Scoring hits at long range with well-aimed arrows, you strip me, wretched me, of my loved ones! And now Orestes—he was showing wisdom in keeping his feet clear of the deadly mire; but now, the hope there was in the house of a cure for your evil revelry[146]—write it down as having betrayed us!

ORESTES

I would have wished to make the acquaintance of such prosperous hosts, and to be entertained by them, as a bringer of good news;[147] for what friendship is there greater than that of host and guest? But I would have thought it an act of impiety to fail to complete such a task for my friends, after having agreed to and after having been welcomed as a guest.[148]

145 lit. "entirely sacked from top to bottom" like a captured city (I have assumed that M's meaningless ἐνπᾶς ὡς derives from a gloss which has displaced an adverb meaning "entirely", possibly but not necessarily Blaydes' παντελῶς).

146 For this image cf. Ag. 1186–93.

147 lit. "on account of good events".

148 This sentence is probably to be taken as having two meanings. Clytaemestra will understand the "task" as the job of bringing the message, "friends" as a generalizing plural referring to Strophius, and "having agreed to" as referring to a promise made to Strophius; for Orestes and the audience, the "task" is his revenge, his "friends" are his family and especially his father, and "having agreed to" refers to his acceptance of the task imposed on him by Apollo.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οὗτοι κυρήσεις μείον᾽ ἀξίων σέθεν,
οὐδ᾽ ἧσσον ἂν γένοιο δώμασιν φίλος.
ἄλλος δ᾽ ὁμοίως ἦλθεν ἂν τάδ᾽ ἀγγελῶν.
ἀλλ᾽ ἔσθ᾽ ὁ καιρὸς ἡμερεύοντας ξένους
μακρᾶς κελεύθου τυγχάνειν τὰ πρόσφορα·
ἄγ᾽ αὐτὸν εἰς ἀνδρῶνας εὐξένους δόμων
ὀπισθόπουν τε τόνδε καὶ ξυνέμπορον,
κἀκεῖ κυρούντων δώμασιν τὰ πρόσφορα.
αἰνῶ δὲ πράσσειν ὡς ὑπευθύνῳ τάδε.
ἡμεις δὲ ταῦτα τοῖς κρατοῦσι δωμάτων
κοινώσομέν τε κοὐ σπανίζοντες φίλων
βουλευσόμεσθα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς πέρι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἶέν, φίλιαι δμωΐδες οἴκων,
πότε δὴ στομάτων
δείξομεν ἰσχὺν ἐπ᾽ Ὀρέστῃ;
ὦ πότνια Χθὼν καὶ πότνι᾽ ἀκτὴ
χώματος, ἥ νῦν ἐπὶ ναυάρχῳ
σώματι κεῖσαι τῷ βασιλείῳ,
νῦν ἐπάκουσον, νῦν ἐπάρηξον·

707 *μείον᾽* Blass, *ἀξίων* Σ^{M}: *μείων* (*μεῖον* M^{pc}) *ἀξίως* M.

713 so Pauw (*τε* already Portus): *ὀπισθόπους δὲ τούσδε καὶ ξυνεμπόρους* M.

715 *ὑπευθύνῳ* Turnebus (cf. Σ^{M} *ὑποδίκῳ*): *ἐπευθύνω* M (*-ωι* M^{s}).

717 *κοινώσομέν m*: *κοινώσωμέν* M.

718 *βουλευσόμεσθα* Stephanus: *βουλευόμεθα* M.

CLYTAEMESTRA

You will not receive less than you deserve, nor will you be any less a friend to this house. Someone else would have come anyway to bring this news. But it's the time when guests who have spent the whole day on a long journey should get a fitting reception. [*To one of her attendants*] Take him to the men's guest-quarters of the palace, together with this fellow-traveller who follows him, and there in the house let them be treated as befits them. I advise you to do this in the expectation of being held responsible.[149] [*Turning back to* ORESTES *and* PYLADES] Meanwhile we will communicate this to the masters of the house[150] and, since we are not short of friends, we will take counsel about this sad event.

[*CLYTAEMESTRA goes into the palace, and one of her servants escorts* ORESTES *and* PYLADES *inside.*]

CHORUS

Come now, dear serving-women of the house,
when, pray, shall we display
the power of our lips in aid of Orestes?
O mighty Earth, O mighty mound
of the tomb that now lies heaped
over the corpse of the king who commanded the fleet,
now give ear, now give aid!

[149] A veiled threat of punishment if the task is not properly done.

[150] The plural is a generalizing one; the actual reference is only to Aegisthus.

νῦν γὰρ ἀκμάζει Πειθὼ δολίαν
ξυγκαταβῆναι, †χθόνιον δ' Ἑρμῆν
καὶ τὸν νύχιον† τούσδ' ἐφορεῦσαι
ξιφοδηλήτοισιν ἀγῶσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔοικεν ἀνὴρ ὁ ξένος τεύχειν κακόν·
τροφὸν δ' Ὀρέστου τήνδ' ὁρῶ κεκλαυμένην.
ποῖ δὴ πατεῖς, Κίλισσα, δωμάτων πύλας;
λύπη δ' ἄμισθός ἐστί σοι ξυνέμπορος.

ΚΙΛΙΣΣΑ

Αἴγισθον ἡ κρατοῦσα τοῖς ξένοις καλεῖν
ὅπως τάχιστ' ἄνωγεν, ὡς σαφέστερον
ἀνὴρ ἀπ' ἀνδρὸς τὴν νεάγγελτον φάτιν
ἐλθὼν πύθηται τήνδε. πρὸς μὲν οἰκέτας
θέτο σκυθρωπὸν ὄμμα, τόν γ' ἐντὸς γέλων
κεύθουσ' ἐπ' ἔργοις διαπεπραγμένοις καλῶς
κείνῃ, δόμοις δὲ τοῖσδε παγκάκως ἔχει
φήμης ὕφ' ἧς ἤγγειλαν οἱ ξένοι τορῶς.

726 δολίαν Portus: δολία M. 727–8 so M (but ἑρμῆα): καὶ τὸν νύχιον χθόνιόν θ' Ἑρ. Hartung: νύχιον δ' Ἑρ. Hermann.
729 τούσδ' Hermann, ἐφορεῦσαι Conington: τοῖσδ' ἐφοδεῦσαι M. 734 τοῖς ξένοις Pauw: τοὺς ξένους M.
738 ὄμμα, τόν γ' ἐντὸς West (ὄμμα, τὸν δ' ἐντὸς H. L. Ahrens): ἐντὸς ὀμμάτων M. 740 ἔχει Robortello, Turnebus (cf. Σ[M] κακῶς . . . διάκειται): ἔχειν M.

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151 This phrase may (or may not) have found its way into the text from a gloss on "Hermes of the Night". For Hermes' associa-

For now is the right time for guileful Persuasion
to enter the arena together with him, and for Hermes of
the Night,
Hermes of the Underworld,[151] to watch over these men
in their deadly contest with the sword.

[*CILISSA comes out of the palace.*]

CHORUS

The man from abroad seems to be causing some trouble: here comes Orestes' nurse, I see, in tears. Where are you bound for, Cilissa,[152] walking over the threshold of the palace? Grief is your unhired fellow-traveller.[153]

CILISSA

The mistress has ordered me to summon Aegisthus as quickly as possible to see the visitors, so that he can come and learn about this newly-reported information more clearly, man from man. In front of the servants she put on a sorrowful face—concealing the laughter that is underneath on account of the event that has come to pass, which is a good thing for her, but for this house things are thoroughly bad, as a result of the news that the visitors have re-

tion with night, cf. *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 66–145, 155–6, 282–290, 358, 578.

[152] This name indicates that the nurse is a native of Cilicia in south-eastern Asia Minor. She is the only ordinary slave (as distinct from captives of noble birth such as Cassandra) to be given a name in any surviving tragedy.

[153] Someone going on a journey who did not have a suitable slave of his own, and wanted to have his luggage carried for him, might hire a man to do so (cf. Aristophanes, *Frogs* 165–177); Cilissa, by contrast, is accompanied by a companion (grief) whom she has not hired and would rather be without.

ἦ δὴ κλυὼν ἐκεῖνος εὐφρανεῖ νόον,
εὖτ' ἂν πύθηται μῦθον. ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ·
ὥς μοι τὰ μὲν παλαιὰ συγκεκραμένα
ἄλγη δύσοιστα τοῖσδ' ἐν Ἀτρέως δόμοις
τυχόντ' ἐμὴν ἤλγυνεν ἐν στέρνοις φρένα,
ἀλλ' οὔ τί πω τοιόνδε πῆμ' ἀνεσχόμην.
τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλα τλημόνως ἤντλουν κακά·
φίλον δ' Ὀρέστην, τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς τριβήν,
ὃν ἐξέθρεψα μητρόθεν δεδεγμένη,
καὶ νυκτιπλάγκτων ὀρθίων κελευμάτων
<
καὶ πολλὰ καὶ μοχθήρ' ἀνωφέλητ' ἐμοὶ
τλάσῃ· τὸ μὴ φρονοῦν γὰρ ὡσπερεὶ βοτὸν
τρέφειν ἀνάγκη—πῶς γὰρ οὔ;—τροφοῦ φρενί·
οὐ γάρ τι φωνεῖ παῖς ἐτ' ὢν ἐν σπαργάνοις
εἰ λιμός, ἢ δίψη τις, ἢ λιψουρία
ἔχει· νέα δὲ νηδὺς αὐτάρχης τέκνων.
τούτων πρόμαντις οὖσα, πολλὰ δ' οἴομαι
ψευσθεῖσα, παιδὸς σπαργάνων φαιδρύντρια,
κναφεὺς τροφεύς τε ταὐτὸν εἰχέτην τέλος.
ἐγὼ διπλᾶς δὴ τάσδε χειρωναξίας
ἔχουσ' Ὀρέστην ἐξεθρεψάμην πατρί·
τεθνηκότος δὲ νῦν τάλαινα πεύθομαι.

742 ἐκεῖνος Robortello: ἐκεῖνον M.
751/2 lacuna posited by Hermann.
754 τροφοῦ φρενί Thomson: τρόπῳ φρενός M.
756 εἰ Stanley: ἢ M.
757 αὐτάρχης Blomfield: αὐτάρκης M.

ported very plainly. For certain, hearing it will bring joy to that man's heart when he learns of the story. O wretched me! For I found the old griefs that have happened in this house of Atreus hard enough to bear, all mixed together as they were, and they pained my heart within my breast; but I have never yet had to endure a sorrow like this. Under the other troubles I patiently bore up. But dear Orestes, who wore away my life with toil, whom I reared after receiving him straight from his mother's womb! ‹Over and over again I heard› his shrill, imperative cries, which forced me to wander around at night ‹and perform› many disagreeable tasks which I had to endure and which did me no good.[154] A child without intelligence must needs be reared like an animal—how could it be otherwise?—by the intelligence of his nurse; when he's still an infant in swaddling clothes he can't speak at all if he's in the grip of hunger or thirst, say, or of an urge to make water—and the immature bowel of small children is its own master. I had to divine these things in advance, and often, I fancy, I was mistaken, and as cleaner of the baby's wrappings—well, a launderer and a caterer were holding the same post. Practising both these two crafts, I reared up Orestes for his father; and now, to my misery, I learn that he is dead! And I'm going

154 The loss of (probably) one line has made this sentence unintelligible as it stands in the text; the supplements adopted here are based loosely on a tentative restoration of the missing line by West (‹*πολλῶν κλυούσῃ πράγματ' ἐμπέδως παρῆν*›).

760 *κναφεὺς* Dobree, *τροφεύς m*: *γναφεὺς στροφεύς* M.
761 *δὴ* Paley: *δὲ* M.
762 *ἐξεθρεψάμην* Auratus or Portus: *ἐξεδεξάμην* M.

στείχω δ' ἐπ' ἄνδρα τῶνδε λυμαντήριον
οἴκων, θέλων δὲ τόνδε πεύσεται λόγον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς οὖν κελεύει νιν μολεῖν ἐσταλμένον;

ΚΙΛΙΣΣΑ

τί πῶς; λέγ' αὖθις, ὡς μάθω σαφέστερον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰ ξὺν λοχίταις εἴτε καὶ μονοστιβῆ.

ΚΙΛΙΣΣΑ

ἄγειν κελεύει δορυφόρους ὀπάονας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μή νυν σὺ ταῦτ' ἄγγελλε δεσπότου στύγει,
ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐλθεῖν, ὡς ἀδειμάντων κλύῃ,
ἄνωχθ' ὅσον τάχιστα γαθούσῃ φρενί.
ἐν ἀγγέλῳ γὰρ κυπτὸς ὀρθοῦται λόγος.

ΚΙΛΙΣΣΑ

ἀλλ' ἦ φρονεῖς εὖ τοῖσι νῦν ἠγγελμένοις;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ τροπαίαν Ζεὺς κακῶν θήσει ποτέ;

764 στείχω Ald.: στείχων M.
765 τόνδε . . . λόγον Blomfield: τῶνδε . . . λόγων M.
767 τί πῶς; Canter: ἦ πῶς M.
768 εἰ Turnebus: ἦ M.
770 ἄγγελλε Robortello: ἄγγελε M.
771 ἀδειμάντων Hartung: ἀδειμάντως M.
773 κυπτὸς Σ^{b} *Iliad* 15.207: κρυπτος M, Σ^{T} *Iliad* 15.207.
773 ὀρθοῦται λόγος Σ^{bT} *Iliad* 15.207: ὀρθούσῃ φρενὶ M.

for the man who has abused and wrecked this house—and this is news he'll be pleased to learn.

CHORUS

What has she told him to come furnished with?

CILISSA

What do you mean, what with? Say it again, so I can understand more clearly.

CHORUS

Was it to be with his guards, or was he to come alone?

CILISSA

She told him to bring his attendant spearmen.

CHORUS

Well, don't take that message to our hated master. Instead, go as fast as you can, with joy in your heart, and tell him to come on his own, so as not to frighten the men who will be speaking to him.[155] The messenger can make a crooked message straight!

CILISSA

What, are you pleased with the news that's just been reported?

CHORUS

Well, what if Zeus is at last about to change the wind of disaster?

[155] lit. "so that he may hear from unfrightened men".

ΚΙΛΙΣΣΑ

καὶ πῶς; Ὀρέστης ἐλπὶς οἴχεται δόμων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὔπω· κακός γε μάντις ἂν γνοίη τάδε.

ΚΙΛΙΣΣΑ

τί φής; ἔχεις τι τῶν λελεγμένων δίχα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄγγελλ' ἰοῦσα, πρᾶσσε τἀπεσταλμένα·
μέλει θεοῖσιν ὥνπερ ἂν μέλῃ πέρι.

ΚΙΛΙΣΣΑ

ἀλλ' εἶμι καὶ σοῖς ταῦτα πείσομαι λόγοις·
γένοιτο δ' ὡς ἄριστα σὺν θεῶν δόσει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α νῦν παραιτουμένᾳ μοι, πάτερ
Ζεῦ θεῶν Ὀλυμπίων,
δὸς †τύχας τυχεῖν δέ μου
κυρίως τὰ σωφροσυνευ†
μαιομένοις ἰδεῖν.

779 ἄγγελλ' Robortello: ἄγγελ' M.

780 μέλει . . . μέλῃ (-η) Ald.: μέλλει . . . μέλλη M.

783 παραιτουμένᾳ (-ῃ) μοι Turnebus, cf. ΣM: παραιτοῦμεν (-ούμεν' Ms) ἐμοὶ M.

785–6 so M: perh. e.g. τύχας εὖ τυχεῖν (Bamberger) κυρίοις (Bothe) δόμου τὸ φῶς.

787 διὰ δίκας Pauw (cf. ΣM δικαίως, κατὰ δίκαν), ἅπαν de Jongh: διαδικᾶσαι πᾶν M.

CILISSA

And how can that be? Orestes, the hope of the house, is gone.

CHORUS

Not yet: it would be a bad diviner that drew that conclusion.

CILISSA

What are you saying? Do you know something that's different from what's been reported?

CHORUS

Go and deliver your message, carry out your instructions! The gods care for what they care for.

CILISSA

Well, I'll go and do that in compliance with your suggestion; may all turn out for the very best, with the gods' blessing! [*She departs.*]

CHORUS

Now at my entreaty, Zeus,
father of the Olympian gods,
grant ‹that fortune may fall out well
for the masters of the house› who yearn
to see ‹the light›.[156]

[156] This passage, like several others in this ode, is almost hopelessly corrupt. I translate here the highly tentative restoration offered in the textual note, which owes much to, though it does not precisely follow, proposals made by Garvie in his commentary, particularly his suggestion that *σωφ-ροσυνευ* may conceal *φῶς* (cf. 131, 809–810, 863, 961) or something like it.

διὰ δίκας ἅπαν ἔπος ἔλακον·
Ζεῦ, σὺ δέ νιν φυλάσσοις.

μεσῳδ. α ἄιε, πρὸ δὲ δᾴων τὸν ἔσωθεν
790 μελάθρων, Ζεῦ, θές, ἐπεί νιν μέγαν ἄρας
δίδυμα καὶ τριπλᾶ παλίμ-
ποινα θέλων ἀμείψῃ.

ἀντ. α ἴσθι δ' ἄνδρος φίλου πῶλον εὖ-
795 νιν ζυγέντ' ἐν ἅρμασιν,
βημάτων ἐν δρόμῳ
προστιθεὶς μέτρον τι καὶ
σῳζόμενον ῥυθμόν,
τοῦτ' ἰδεῖν δάπεδον ἀνόμενον
†βημάτων† ὄρεγμα.

στρ. β οἵ τ' ἔσωθε δωμάτων
801 πλουτογαθῆ μυχὸν κομίζετε,
κλῦτε, σύμφρονες θεοί·

789 ἄιε Weil: ἑ ἑ M.
789 δᾴων Weil, τὸν ἔσωθεν Seidler: δὴ 'χθρῶν τῶν ἔσω M.
790 Ζεῦ . . . νιν Seidler: ὦ Ζεῦ . . . μιν M.
795 ἅρμασιν (-σι) Σ^{M}: ἅρματι M.
796 βημάτων Grotefend: πημάτων M.
797 τι καὶ Davies: τις ἂν M.
798 ἀνόμενον Emperius: ἀνομένων (o in an erasure) M.
799 βημάτων M: ὀξὺ ποδῶν West: perh. ὠκὺ ποδῶν.
801 πλουτογαθῆ Turnebus: πλουταγαθῆ M.
801 κομίζετε Hermann: νομίζετε M.

Every word I have uttered has been in accordance with
justice:
Zeus, may you protect it!

Hear us, Zeus, and set the man within the house
above his foes, for if you raise him to greatness
you will receive in return, with delight,
twofold and threefold recompense.[157]

Know that the orphaned colt yoked to the chariot
is the son of a man you loved;
on his strides in the race
impose a measure and
a steady rhythm,
that this ground[158] may see the ‹swift› striving
‹of his legs›[159] reach the end of the course.

And you who within the house
tend the inner storeroom that rejoices in its wealth,[160]
hear us, gods who share our wishes!

[157] From the sacrifices Orestes will offer (cf. 255–261).

[158] δάπεδον can mean both "race-track" (e.g. Euripides, *Helen* 208) and "house-floor" (e.g. *Iliad* 4.2, *Odyssey* 10.227).

[159] βημάτων (from 796) appears to have replaced another word or words; I translate my modification of a suggestion by West.

[160] Probably Zeus Ktesios (cf. *Ag.* 1038) and Hestia (goddess of hearth and home) are meant; but the audience may well also think of those other long-standing inhabitants of the house, the Furies.

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802 κλῦτε Dindorf: κλύετε M.

ἄγετε <– ∪ – ∪ – ×>
τῶν πάλαι πεπραγμένων
λύσασθ' αἷμα προσφάτοις δίκαις·
γέρων φόνος μηκέτ' ἐν δόμοις τέκοι.

μεσῳδ. β τὸ δὲ καλῶς κτίμενον ὦ μέγα ναίων
στόμιον, εὖ δὸς ἀνιδεῖν δόμον ἀνδρός,
καί νιν ἐλευθερίας φῶς
λαμπρὸν ἰδεῖν φιλίοις
ὄμμασιν ἐκ δνοφερᾶς καλύπτρας.

ἀντ. β ξυλλάβοιτο δ' ἐνδίκως
παῖς ὁ Μαίας, ἐπεὶ φορώτατος
πρᾶξιν οὐρίσαι θέλων·
πόλλ' ἄδηλ' ἔφανε †χρῄζων κρυπτά†,

803 lacuna posited here by Wilamowitz; perh. e.g. <δεσπόταν πάλιν, καὶ>.
807 τὸ δὲ Robortello: τόδε Mpc: τάδε or τώδε Mac.
807 κτίμενον Bamberger: κτά΄μενον Ms: κταμενων M.
809 ἐλευθερίας φῶς Dindorf, λαμπρὸν Bamberger: ἐλευθερίως λαμπρῶς M. 811 ἐκ Hermann: om. M.
812 ξυλλάβοιτο Weil: ξυλλάβοι M.
813 ἐπεὶ φορώτατος Emperius: ἐπιφορώτατος M.
814 οὐρίσαι Conington, θέλων Ms: οὐρίαν θελεν M.
815 πόλλ' ἄδηλ' ἔφανε Wilamowitz: πολλὰ δ' ἄλλα φανεῖ (εῖ in an erasure) M. 815 χρῄζων κρυπτά (-τας or -ται Mac) M (glosses on θέλων and ἄδηλ'?): perh. e.g. <πράγματ'>.

161 The supplementation of the text, and even the meaning of ἄγετε, are quite uncertain; Sier, for example, proposes ἄγετε,

Bring <back our master, and>[161]
remove the blood of long-past deeds
by a fresh act of justice:
may the ancient murder breed no more in the house.

And you who dwell at the great, well-built
portal,[162] let the man's house raise its head in happiness,
and let it, with friendly eyes,
behold in him the brilliant light
of freedom, after long being veiled in darkness.

And may the son of Maia[163] aid him,
as by rights he should; for he is the best of sternwinds
to waft an action on, if he chooses.
He makes many obscure things plain,[164]

<τῶν μέλεσθ' ἐναργῶς> ("come, make manifest your concern with it [the house]".

[162] This god is almost certainly Apollo, and the "portal" (literally "mouth") is usually identified with some feature of the sanctuary of Delphi; but the word στόμιον is not used elsewhere in connection with Delphi, the gods addressed before and after this stanza are closely connected with the palace (for Hermes cf. 1, 583), and the house is strongly in the chorus's mind throughout this ode (786, 790, 798, 800–1, 806, 808, 820, 835). Sier is therefore probably right to suppose that the chorus are addressing Apollo Agyieus (cf. *Ag.* 1081) and that the "portal" is that of the palace.

[163] Hermes.

[164] For example in his roles as the guide of travellers (Hermes Hegemonios; cf. e.g. Theocritus 25.4–6) and the patron of interpreters (ἑρμηνεῖς); but this aspect of Hermes is mentioned here only as a foil to set off by contrast the aspect of him in which the chorus are really interested, his powers of deception.

ἄσκοπον δ' ἔπος λέγων
νυκτὸς προὐμμάτων σκότον φέρει,
καθ' ἡμέραν δ' οὐδὲν ἐμφανέστερος.

στρ. γ καὶ τότ' ἤδη 'ς πλόον
δωμάτων λυτήριον
θῆλυν οὐριοστάταν
†ὁμοῦ κρεκτὸν† γοήτων νόμον
μεθήσομεν· "πλεῖ τάδ' εὖ·
ἐμὸν ἐμὸν κέρδος αὔξεται τόδ', Ἄ-
τα δ' ἀποστατεῖ φίλων."

μεσῳδ. γ σὺ δὲ θαρσῶν, ὅταν ἥκῃ μέρος ἔργων,
ἐπαΰσας θροεούσᾳ
πρὸς σὲ "τέκνον" "πατρός" αὔδα,
καὶ πέραιν' ἀνεπίμομφον ἄταν·

ἀντ. γ Περσέως τ' ἐν φρεσὶν
<– ∪> καρδίαν σχεθὼν,

817 *νυκτὸς προὐμμάτων* Bamberger: *νύκτα πρό τ' ὀμμάτων* M.

819–820 *τότ' ἤδη* Blomfield, *'ς πλόον* Sier: *τότε δὴ πλόυτον* M (*υτ* from *λυτήριον*). 822 *ὁμοῦ κρεκτὸν* M^{pc} (*ὁμοῦ* in an erasure, perhaps replacing *ὑ . . .*): *ὀξύκρεκτον* Kirchhoff: *ὑψίκρεκτον* West. 823 *πλεῖ* Kirchhoff: *πόλει* M.

827 after *ἐπαΰσας* M adds *πατρὸς ἔργωι*: del. Hermann.

827 *θροεούσᾳ* G. C.W. Schneider: *θροούσαι* M.

829 *αὔδα* Bourdelot: *αὐδὰν* M^{s} Σ^{M}: *αὐδᾶν* M.

but he also, by speaking words that are hard to see
through,[165]
casts darkness before the eyes by night,
nor is he any more perspicuous by day.

And then at last, for the voyage
that will set the house free,
we will utter feminine strains
to set the wind fair, the strains that are sung
by charmers to ‹shrill› accompaniment: "It's smooth
sailing!
My gain, my gain is swelling here,
and destruction stands far from my friends!"

[*Gesturing towards the house, inside which is* ORESTES]

As for you, when the time for action comes, be
confident,
and when she cries to you "My child!"
cap that by shouting "My *father's* child!"
and complete an act of destruction that carries no
blame;

and with the heart of Perseus
in your breast,

[165] Such as the deceptive words he inspired Orestes to say to Clytaemestra or the chorus (through Cilissa) to Aegisthus, in two scenes which were separated by an invocation of him (726–9).

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830 *πέραιν'* Auratus or Portus, *ἀνεπίμομφον* Schütz: *περαίνων ἐπίμομφαν* M. 832 ‹*σαῖσι*› Blomfield: <*τλᾶθι*> (retaining *τιθείς* in 436) West.

τοῖς θ' ὑπὸ χθονὸς φίλοις
τοῖς τ' ἄνωθεν προπράσσων χάριν,
Γοργοῦς λυγρᾶς ἔνδοθεν
φόνιον ἅταν τίθει, τὸν αἴτιον δ'
†ἐξαπολλὺς μόρον†.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἥκω μὲν οὐκ ἄκλητος ἀλλ' ὑπάγγελος·
νέαν φάτιν δὲ πεύθομαι λέγειν τινὰς
ξένους μολόντας οὐδαμῶς ἐφίμερον,
μόρον γ' Ὀρέστου. καὶ τόδ' αὖ φέρειν δόμοις
γένοιτ' ἂν ἄχθος αἱματοσταγές, φόνῳ
τῷ πρόσθεν ἑλκαίνουσι καὶ δεδηγμένοις.
πῶς ταῦτ'; ἀληθῆ καὶ βλέποντα δοξάσω,
ἢ πρὸς γυναικῶν δειματούμενοι λόγοι
πεδάρσιοι θρῴσκουσι, θνῄσκοντες μάτην;
τί τῶνδ' ἂν εἴποις ὥστε δηλῶσαι φρενί;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἠκούσαμεν μέν, πυνθάνου δὲ τῶν ξένων

833 θ' Robortello: δ' M. 834–5 χάριν Heimsoeth, Γοργοῦς Kirchhoff, λυγρᾶς Blomfield: χάριτος ὀργᾶς λυπρᾶς M.
836 φόνιον Heimsoeth: φονίαν Σ^{M}: φοινίαν M.
836 τίθει Heath: τιθείς M. 837 ἐξαπολλὺς μόρον M: ἐξαπόλλυε σπόρον Tucker: ἐξαπόλλυ' εἰσορῶν Murray.
841 γ' Auratus or Portus: δ' M.
841 αὖ φέρειν Blomfield: ἀμφέρειν M: ἂν φέρειν Turnebus.
842 αἱματο- Auratus or Portus (cf. Σ^{M} ὡς ἐπὶ μαχαίρας): δειματο- M. 843 ἑλκαίνουσι καὶ δεδηγμένοις Bamberger: ἑλκαίνοντι καὶ δεδηγμένωι M.

earning the gratitude of[166] your friends below the earth
and of those above,
wreak bloody ruin in the house
upon the pestilent Gorgon,[167] and root out
the guilty ‹seed[?]›.

[*Enter* AEGISTHUS, *alone.*]

AEGISTHUS

I have come after being called here by a messenger.[168] I learn that some foreigners have come bearing word of news that is far from welcome, namely the death of Orestes. This would be yet another burden for this house to bear and would make its wounds drip blood again[169] when it is still gashed and festering from the murder that happened before. What is it all about? Should I regard it as the living truth, or are these just the frightened words of women that leap high in the air[170] and die having come to nothing? What can you tell me about this that will make the matter clear to my mind?

CHORUS

We have heard the story, but you should go inside where

166 lit. "proactively doing a favour to".

167 Clytaemestra is compared to Medusa the Gorgon whom Perseus slew.

168 lit. "not uncalled, but through the agency of a messenger".

169 lit. "this also again would be a blood-dripping burden for the house to bear".

170 Like sparks from a fire (Garvie).

εἴσω παρελθών. οὐδὲν ἀγγέλων σθένος
ὡς αὐτὸν ἀνδρὸς ἄνδρα πεύθεσθαι πάρα.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἰδεῖν ἐλέγξαι τ' εὖ θέλω τὸν ἄγγελον,
εἴτ' αὐτὸς ἦν θνήσκοντος ἐγγύθεν παρὼν
εἴτ' ἐξ ἀμαυρᾶς κληδόνος λέγει μάτην.
οὗτοι φρέν' ἂν κλέψειεν ὠμματωμένην.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, τί λέγω; πόθεν ἄρξωμαι
τάδ' ἐπευχομένη κἀπιθεάζουσ',
ὑπὸ δ' εὐνοίας
πῶς ἴσον εἰποῦσ' ἀνύσωμαι;
νῦν γὰρ μέλλουσι μιανθεῖσαι
πειραὶ κοπάνων ἀνδροδαΐκτων
ἢ πάνυ θήσειν Ἀγαμεμνονίων
οἴκων ὄλεθρον διὰ παντός,
ἢ πῦρ καὶ φῶς ἐπ' ἐλευθερίᾳ
δαίων ἀρχάς τε πολισσονόμους
πατέρων θ' ἕξει μέγαν ὄλβον.
τοιάνδε πάλην μόνος ὢν ἔφεδρος

850 αὐτὸν Canter, then ἀνδρὸς Weil (ἀνδρὸς αὐτὸν Pauw): αὐτὸς αὐτὸν M.

850 πάρα Auratus or Portus: πέρι M.

854 φρέν' ἂν Monk, Hermann, κλέψειεν Stephanus: φρένα κλέψειαν M.

856 κἀπιθεάζουσ' Schütz: καἰπιθοάζουσα M (οα M^s in an erasure).

865 πατέρων θ' ἕξει Weil: ἕξει πατέρων M.

the visitors are and inquire from them. The value of a messenger's word[171] is nothing compared to inquiring directly, man from man.

AEGISTHUS

I want to see the messenger and question him well as to whether he was himself present in the vicinity when the man died, or whether his story is based on an insubstantial rumour and amounts to nothing. He will certainly not deceive a mind that has its eyes open. [*He goes into the palace.*]

CHORUS

Zeus, Zeus, what shall I say? Where should I begin
making this prayer, this appeal to god,
and after speaking, in loyalty,
neither too much nor too little, how should I finish?
For now the bloodstained edges
of man-slaughtering cleavers are either on the point
of bringing about the complete destruction,
for ever, of Agamemnon's house,
or he[172] will cause fire and light to be kindled
in honour of freedom, and will hold
the governing rulership of the city
and the great wealth of his fathers.
Such is the wrestling bout in which godlike Orestes,

171 In this sentence the "messenger", whose reliability the chorus-leader is disparaging, is herself; in Aegisthus' reply, on the other hand, the same word refers to the supposed Phocian traveller.

172 Orestes.

δισσοῖς μέλλει θεῖος Ὀρέστης
ἄψειν· εἴη δ' ἐπὶ νίκῃ.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ἔ ἔ, ὀτοτοτοῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔα ἔα μάλα·
πῶς ἔχει; πῶς κέκρανται δόμοις;
ἀποσταθῶμεν πράγματος τελούμενου,
ὅπως δοκῶμεν τῶνδ' ἀναίτιοι κακῶν
εἶναι· μάχης γὰρ δὴ κεκύρωται τέλος.

ΟΙΚΕΤΗΣ

οἴμοι, πανοίμοι δεσπότου †τελουμένου†·
οἴμοι μάλ' αὖθις ἐν τρίτοις προσφθέγμασιν·
Αἴγισθος οὐκέτ' ἐστίν. ἀλλ' ἀνοίξατε
ὅπως τάχιστα, καὶ γυναικείους πύλας
μοχλοῖς χαλᾶτε· καὶ μάλ' ἡβῶντος δὲ δεῖ—
οὐχ ὡς δ' ἀρῆξαι διαπεπραγμένῳ· τί γάρ;
ἰοὺ ἰού.
κωφοῖς ἀϋτῶ καὶ καθεύδουσιν μάτην

867 *θεῖος* Turnebus: *θείοις* M. 875 *τελουμένου* M: *πεπληγμένου* Schütz. 880 *διαπεπραγμένῳ* $^{i}\Sigma^{M}$ (*τῷ σφαγέντι*): *διαπεπραγμένων* M.

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173 Orestes is spoken of as an ἔφεδρος, a competitor (in wrestling, boxing, etc.) who received a bye and waited to fight the winner of a contest between two others. Here, the "previous round" was that in which the pair Clytaemestra-Aegisthus defeated Agamemnon; now Orestes is about to take them on.

after waiting out the previous round,[173] is about to
engage
alone against two opponents. May it end in victory!

AEGISTHUS [*within*]

Ah-ah! Otototoi!

CHORUS

Hey, hey, listen!
What's happened? What's been the fate of the house?

Let us stand away from the action that is coming to completion, so that we may be thought to have no share in causing these troubles: clearly the issue of the fight has been decided.

[*They cluster well away from the building. A* SERVANT *bursts out of the main door.*[174]]

SERVANT

Ah me, ah me indeed, for my master who has been struck down! Ah me again, I say it a third time! Aegisthus is no more! [*He begins to knock frantically at the door of the women's quarters.*] Open up, as fast as you can! Undo the bolts on the women's doors! And we also need a really strapping fellow—[*checking himself*] but not so as to help a man who's already finished with—what would be the point? [*Knocking again*] Ahoy, ahoy! [*To himself*] I'm shouting to the deaf, and calling uselessly to people who

[174] From here to 930 the action is to be imagined as taking place in the interior courtyard of the palace; the main door leads to the men's quarters, a flanking door to the women's. See Sommerstein *AT* 236–8.

ἄκραντα βάζω. ποῖ Κλυταιμήστρα; τί δρᾷς;
ἔοικε νῦν αὐτῆς ἐπιξήνου πέλας
αὐχὴν πεσεῖσθαι πρὸς Δίκης πεπληγμένος.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

τί δ' ἐστὶ χρῆμα; τίνα βοὴν ἵστης δόμοις;

ΟΙΚΕΤΗΣ

τὸν ζῶντα καίνειν τοὺς τεθνηκότας λέγω.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οἲ 'γώ, ξυνῆκα τοὔπος ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων·
δόλοις ὀλούμεθ', ὥσπερ οὖν ἐκτείναμεν.
δοίη τις ἀνδροκμῆτα πέλεκυν ὡς τάχος·
εἰδῶμεν εἰ νικῶμεν ἢ νικώμεθα·
ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ τοῦδ' ἀφικόμην κακοῦ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σὲ καὶ ματεύω· τῷδε δ' ἀρκούντως ἔχει.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οἲ 'γώ· τέθνηκας, φίλτατ' Αἰγίσθου βία;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φιλεῖς τὸν ἄνδρα; τοιγὰρ ἐν ταὐτῷ τάφῳ
κείσῃ· θανόντα δ' οὔ τι μὴ προδῷς ποτε.

883 ἐπιξήνου Abresch: ἐπὶ ξυροῦ M.
884 Δίκης Hermann: δίκην M.
890 εἰ Turnebus: ἢ M.

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175 Recognizing (temporarily) that she must now either kill, or be killed by, her son.

are wasting their time asleep. [*Knocking again*] Where's Clytaemestra gone? What's she doing? [*To himself*] Looks as though her head is now going to fall beside the chopping-block, struck off by the hand of Justice.

CLYTAEMESTRA [*opening the women's door and coming out*]

What's the matter? What's this cry that you're raising through the house?

SERVANT

The dead are killing the living, I tell you!

CLYTAEMESTRA

Ah me, I understand your riddling words! We are going to perish by deception, just as we killed by deception. Someone give me, right away, an axe that can kill a man! [*The SERVANT goes inside.*] Let us find out whether we're to be the winners or the losers—for that's what I've come to in this evil business.[175]

[*ORESTES comes out through the main door, sword in hand.*]

ORESTES

You're just who I'm looking for; *he* [*pointing back into the house*] has been satisfactorily dealt with.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Ah me! Mighty Aegisthus, my beloved, are you dead?

ORESTES

You love the man? In that case you can lie in the same grave—and now he's dead, you'll certainly never betray him!

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἐπίσχες, ὦ παῖ, τόνδε δ᾽ αἴδεσαι, τέκνον,
μαστόν, πρὸς ᾧ σὺ πολλὰ δὴ βρίζων ἅμα
οὔλοισιν ἐξήμελξας εὐτραφὲς γάλα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Πυλάδη, τί δράσω; μητέρ᾽ αἰδεσθῶ κτανεῖν;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

900 ποῦ δαὶ τὸ λοιπὸν Λοξίου μαντεύματα
τὰ πυθόχρηστα, πιστά τ᾽ εὐορκώματα;
ἅπαντας ἐχθροὺς τῶν θεῶν ἡγοῦ πλέον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κρίνω σὲ νικᾶν, καὶ παραινεῖς μοι καλῶς.
ἕπου, πρὸς αὐτὸν τόνδε σὲ σφάξαι θέλω·
905 καὶ ζῶντα γάρ νιν κρείσσον᾽ ἡγήσω πατρός.
τούτῳ θανοῦσα συγκάθευδ᾽, ἐπεὶ φιλεῖς
τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον, ὃν δὲ χρῆν φιλεῖν στυγεῖς.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἐγώ σ᾽ ἔθρεψα, σὺν δὲ γηρᾶναι θέλω.

896 δ᾽ αἴδεσαι Sophianus, Turnebus: δήσεται M.
897 ᾧ σὺ Robortello: ὠκὺ M.
900 τὸ λοιπὸν Nauck: τὰ λοιπὰ M.
901 τ᾽ Hermann: δ᾽ M.
908 σὺν Auratus: νῦν M.

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176 Clytaemestra's action, and some of the words that accompany it, are modelled on those of Hecuba at *Iliad* 22.79–89.

CLYTAEMESTRA [*baring one breast*][176]

Stop, my son, and have respect, my child, for this breast, at which you many times drowsed while sucking the nourishing milk with your gums!

[*During this speech* PYLADES, *also armed, has come out to join* ORESTES]

ORESTES

Pylades, what shall I do? Should respect prevent me from killing my mother?

PYLADES

Then what becomes in future of Loxias' oracles delivered at Pytho, and of faithful, sworn pledges?[177] Hold all men your enemies, rather than the gods!

ORESTES

I judge you the winner; you have advised me well. [*To* CLYTAEMESTRA] Follow me. I want to slay you right next to that man, since in life too you thought him better than my father. Sleep with him in death, since he is the man you love, while hating the man you should have loved!

CLYTAEMESTRA

I reared you, and I want to grow old with you.

[177] It is not clear whether this refers (i) to a sworn pledge by Apollo to protect Orestes if he carries out the revenge (cf. 269–270, 1029–33), or (ii) to a sworn undertaking by Orestes to do so, or (iii) to mutual oaths of fidelity between Orestes and Pylades (so the scholia; cf. 977–9 where this phrase is echoed by ὅρκος . . . πιστώμασιν . . . ἐνόρκως referring to the conspiracy between Clytaemestra and Aegisthus).

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πατροκτονοῦσα γὰρ ξυνοικήσεις ἐμοί;

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἡ Μοῖρα τούτων, ὦ τέκνον, παραιτία.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ τόνδε τοίνυν Μοῖρ' ἐπόρσυνεν μόρον.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οὐδὲν σεβίζῃ γενεθλίους ἀράς, τέκνον;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τεκοῦσα γάρ μ' ἔρριψας εἰς τὸ δυστυχές.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οὕτοι σ' ἀπέρριψ' εἰς δόμους δορυξένους.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀκῶς ἐπράθην ὢν ἐλευθέρου πατρός.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ποῦ δῆθ' ὁ τῖμος ὄντιν' ἀντεδεξάμην;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αἰσχύνομαί σοι τοῦτ' ὀνειδίσαι σαφῶς.

ΚΛΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

μἀλλ' εἴφ' ὁμοίως καὶ πατρὸς τοῦ σοῦ μάτας.

911 ἐπόρσυνεν *m*: ἐπώρσυνεν M.
915 ἀκῶς (αἰκῶς) Bothe: διχῶς M.
917 σοι Canter, cf. Σ^{M} συγκοιμωμένη (= -ῃ): σου M.

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178 By sending him into exile in Phocis.
179 sc. as if I were a slave (cf. 132–5).

ORESTES

What, you expect to share my home, after killing my father?

CLYTAEMESTRA

Destiny, my child, shares the responsibility for these events.

ORESTES

Then Destiny has been the cause of this coming death too!

CLYTAEMESTRA

Have you no respect for a parent's curse, my child?

ORESTES

You gave birth to me—and then threw me out into misery.[178]

CLYTAEMESTRA

I did not throw you out; I sent you to the house of a friend and ally.

ORESTES

I was the son of a free man, and was ignominiously sold.[179]

CLYTAEMESTRA

Well, where is the price that I received in exchange?

ORESTES

Decency forbids me to reproach you with that openly.[180]

CLYTAEMESTRA

No, you should speak equally of your father's lustful follies.[181]

180 Implying, as Clytaemestra evidently understands, that the "price" was Aegisthus (cf. 133–4).

181 With such women as Chryseis (*Ag.* 1439) and Cassandra.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μὴ 'λεγχε τὸν πονοῦντ' ἔσω καθημένη.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἄλγος γυναιξὶν ἀνδρὸς εἴργεσθαι, τέκνον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τρέφει δέ γ' ἀνδρὸς μόχθος ἡμένας ἔσω.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

κτενεῖν ἔοικας, ὦ τέκνον, τὴν μητέρα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σύ τοι σεαυτήν, οὐκ ἐγώ, κατακτενεῖς.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ὅρα, φύλαξαι μητρὸς ἐγκότους κύνας,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὰς τοῦ πατρὸς δὲ πῶς φύγω παρείς τάδε;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ἔοικα θρηνεῖν ζῶσα πρὸς τύμβον μάτην.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πατρὸς γὰρ αἶμα τόνδε σοὐρίζει μόρον.

927 αἶμα Blaydes: αἶσα M.
927 σοὐρίζει Pauw: σ' ὁρίζει M^{pc}: πορίζει M^{ac}.

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182 i.e. the Furies.

183 This line is a blend of two ideas: (i) "trying to persuade you is as futile as talking to the dead" (cf. Menander, *Dis Exapaton* 28–29 ~ Plautus, *Bacchides* 519 *quam si ad sepulcrum mortuo narret*

ORESTES

Don't censure the man who toiled away while you were sitting at home.

CLYTAEMESTRA

It's painful for women, child, to be kept apart from their man.

ORESTES

But it's the man's labour that feeds the women sitting at home.

CLYTAEMESTRA

You seem, my child, to be on the point of killing your mother.

ORESTES

It is not I that will kill you: *you* will have killed yourself.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Take care! Beware your mother's wrathful hounds![182]

ORESTES

But how am I to escape my father's, if I fail to do this?

CLYTAEMESTRA

It looks as though I am making a useless living dirge to a tomb.[183]

ORESTES

Yes, for my father's blood determines this doom for you.

logos), (ii) "I am uttering my own funeral lament while still alive" (cf. *Ag.* 1322–3, *Supp.* 117). As the first half of the play showed, and as Orestes' reply will remind us, it is not *always* futile to address the dead.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

οἵ ᾽γώ, τεκοῦσα τόνδ᾽ ὅφιν ἐθρεψάμην·
ἦ κάρτα μάντις οὐξ ὀνειράτων φόβος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

930 κάνες τὸν οὐ χρῆν· καὶ τὸ μὴ χρεὼν πάθε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στένω μὲν οὖν καὶ τῶνδε συμφορὰν διπλῆν·
ἐπεὶ δὲ πολλῶν αἱμάτων ἐπήκρισεν
τλήμων ᾽Ορέστης, τοῦθ᾽ ὅμως αἱρούμεθα,
ὀφθαλμὸν οἴκων μὴ πανώλεθρον πεσεῖν.

στρ. α ἔμολε μὲν δίκα Πριαμίδαις χρόνῳ,
936 βαρύδικος ποινά·
ἔμολε δ᾽ εἰς δόμον τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος
διπλοῦς λέων, διπλοῦς ᾽Αρης·
ἔλασε δ᾽ εἰς τὸ πᾶν
940 ὁ πυθόχρηστος φυγὰς
θεόθεν εὖ φραδαῖσιν ὡρμημένος.

ιεσῳδ. α ἐπολολύξατ᾽ ὦ δεσποσύνων δόμων
ἀναφυγᾷ κακῶν καὶ κτεάνων τριβᾶς

930 τὸν Hermann: γ᾽ ὃν M.
936 βαρύδικος Victorius: καρύδικος M.
939 ἔλασε $^{i}\Sigma^{M}$ (ἤλασεν): ἔλακε M.
940 πυθόχρηστος Butler: πυθοχρήστας (-της M^{s}) M.
942 ἐπολολύξατ᾽ ὦ Seidler: ἐπολολυξάτω M.
943 ἀναφυγᾷ Heimsoeth: ἀναφυγὰς M.

CLYTAEMESTRA

Ah me, this is the snake I bore and nourished! The dream that terrified me was truly prophetic indeed!

ORESTES

You killed the one whom you ought not; now suffer what you ought not!

[*ORESTES and PYLADES force CLYTAEMESTRA in through the main door.*]

CHORUS [*returning to their previous position*]

I lament even the double downfall of these two; but since Orestes, after much hardship, has brought a climax to all these acts of bloodshed, we nevertheless make this choice, that the light[184] of the house should not succumb and be utterly destroyed.

Justice came eventually to the family of Priam,
the justice of grievous punishment;
and now to the house of Agamemnon there has come
a twofold lion, a twofold spirit of violence,[185]
and the exile who received an oracle at Pytho
has brought it to complete fulfilment,
having been well sped on his way by the words of god.

O raise a cry of triumph, that the house of our master
has escaped from its troubles and from the wasting of its possessions

184 lit. "eye" (cf. 238). 185 lit. "a twofold Ares". The reference is probably to Orestes and Pylades, whom we have just seen together driving Clytaemestra in to her death.

ὑπὸ δυοῖν μιαστόροιν,
δυσοίμου τύχας.

ἀντ. α ἔμολε δ' ᾧ μέλει κρυπταδίου μάχας,
δολιόφρων Ποινά·
ἔθιγε δ' ἐν μάχᾳ χερὸς ἐτήτυμος
Διὸς κόρα—Δίκαν δέ νιν
προσαγορεύομεν
βροτοὶ τυχόντες καλῶς—
ὀλέθριον πνέουσ' ἐπ' ἐχθροῖς κότον·

στρ. β τάνπερ ὁ Λοξίας ὁ Παρνασσίας
μέγαν ἔχων μυχὸν χθονὸς ἐπωρθία-
ξεν ἀδόλως δόλια
βλαπτομέναν· χρονισθεῖσα δ' ἐποίχεται.
κρατεῖ δ' αἰεί πως τὸ θεῖον τομὰν
ὑπουργεῖν κακοῖς.
ἄξιον οὐρανοῦχον ἀρχὰν σέβειν.

ἐσῳδ. β πάρα τε φῶς ἰδεῖν, μέγα τ' ἀφῃρέθη

944 δυοῖν *m*: δοιοῖν M. 946 ᾧ Auratus or Portus: ᾧ M.
948 δ' ἐν Abresch: δὲ M. 952 ἐπ' Hermann: ἐν M.
953 τάνπερ Jacob, cf. Σ^{M} 955–6: τάπερ M, ΄Σ^{M} 953.
953 Παρνασσίας Musgrave: Παρνάσσιος M.
954–5 ἐπωρθίαξεν Meineke: ἐπ' ὄχθει ἄξεν M.
955 δόλια Hermann, cf. Σ^{M} δολίως: δολίας M.
956 χρονισθεῖσα Heath, δ' Metzger: ἐν χρόνοις θεῖσαν M.
957 κρατεῖ δ' αἰεί Rose: κρατεῖται M.
957 τομὰν Thomson: παρὰ τὸ μὴ M (παρὰ del. Hermann).
959 ἄξιον Bothe: ἄξιον δ' M.

at the hands of its two defilers—
a lamentable fate.

She has come, she who delights in underhand fighting,
crafty-minded Revenge;
and the fighter's hand was touched by the very daughter
of Zeus (we mortals
hit the mark well
when we name her Jus-tice[186])
breathing deadly wrath against the enemy—

her whom Loxias, who dwells in that great hollow
of the Parnassian land,[187] proclaimed
without deceit to have been injured
by deceit: after long delay, she has attacked.
Always, it seems, divine power prevails, so as to
administer
a surgical cure[188] to ills.
It is fitting to revere the rulers who dwell in heaven.

The light is now plain to see, and the great curb[189]

[186] The point is that the name Δί-κα implies a close connection with Zeus (genitive Δι-ός).

[187] Probably meaning the valley below Mount Parnassus in which the sanctuary of Delphi is situated: ὁ Παρνάσσιος μυχός is used in this sense in Pindar, *Pythian* 10.8.

[188] Cf. 539, *Ag.* 848–850. [189] Strictly "cavesson", a composite metal noseband used for controlling the movement of a horse; see J. K. Anderson, *JHS* 80 (1960) 3–6.

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961 μέγα . . . ἀφηρέθη Auratus or Portus: μέγαν . . . ἀφηρέθην M.

ψάλιον οἴκων.
ἄναγε μὰν δόμοι· πολὺν ἄγαν χρόνον
χαμαιπετεῖς ἔκειστε.

ἀντ. β τάχα δὲ παντελὴς †χρόνος† ἀμείψεται
966 πρόθυρα δωμάτων, ὅταν ἀφ' ἑστίας
πᾶν ἐλάσῃ μύσος
καθαρμοῖσιν ἀτᾶν ἐλατηρίοις.
τύχαι δ' εὐπροσώπῳ κοίτᾳ τὸ πᾶν
970 ἰδεῖν, πρευμενεῖς
971 μέτοικοι δόμων, πεσοῦνται πάλιν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

973 ἴδεσθε χώρας τὴν διπλῆν τυραννίδα
πατροκτόνους τε δωμάτων πορθήτορας.
975 σεμνοὶ μὲν ἦσαν ἐν θρόνοις τόθ' ἥμενοι,
φίλοι δὲ καὶ νῦν, ὡς ἐπεικάσαι πάθη

963 δόμοι Hermann: δόμοις M.
964 ἔκειστε Wilamowitz: εκεῖσθ' αἰεί M.
965 χρόνος (from 963) M: πρόμος Lafontaine: ὅλβος Kayser.
967 πᾶν ἐλάσῃ μύσος Butler: μύσος πᾶν ἐλάσει (-σῃ M^s) M. 968 ἀτᾶν ἐλατηρίοις Schütz: ἅπαν ἐλατήριον M.
969 τύχαι Scaliger: τύχα M.
970 ἰδεῖν Hermann: ἰδεῖν ἀκοῦσαι M.
970 πρευμενεῖς Paley (after Musgrave): θρεομένοις M.
971 μέτοικοι δόμων Scaliger, cf. Σ^M οἱ νῦν τοὺς δόμους οἰκοῦντες: μετοικοδόμων M.
{972} M repeats πάρα τὸ [sic] φῶς ἰδεῖν (cf. 961): del. Heimsoeth.
976 δὲ Abresch: τε M.

has been taken away from the house.
Rise up, rise up, house! Too long a time
you have lain fallen on the ground.

Soon, in full power, ‹the prince›[190] will cross
the portal of the house, when he has banished
all pollution from the hearth
by purification rites that drive out ruinous evils.[191]
Fortune will fall back into
a state entirely cheerful to behold
and will take up friendly residence in the house.

The ekkyklēma *is rolled out of the main door. On it is* ORESTES, *standing over the dead bodies of* CLYTAEMESTRA *and* AEGISTHUS; *in his right hand is his sword, in his left hand the wreathed olive-branch of a suppliant. He is accompanied by several attendants, two of whom are holding between them a folded robe.*

ORESTES

Behold the twin tyrants of this land, the murderers of my father and the ravagers of my house! They were august in the old days, sitting on their thrones, and they are still a loving pair—or so one may guess their fate to be[192]—and

[190] I translate Lafontaine's conjecture, which West adopts; the transmitted reading ("Soon all-fulfilling Time will cross . . .") is, as he shows (*Studies* 260), unacceptable.

[191] Implying that Orestes is to be imagined as carrying out these purification rites even now; so Odysseus cleanses his house after the slaughter of Penelope's suitors (*Odyssey* 22.480–494).

[192] i.e. they may be presumed to be still, in Hades, as affectionate as ever.

πάρεστιν, ὅρκος τ᾽ ἐμμένει πιστώμασιν·
ξυνώμοσαν μὲν θάνατον ἀθλίῳ πατρὶ
καὶ ξυνθανεῖσθαι, καὶ τάδ᾽ εὐόρκως ἔχει.
980 ἴδεσθε δ᾽ αὖτε, τῶνδ᾽ ἐπήκοοι κακῶν,
τὸ μηχάνημα, δεσμὸν ἀθλίῳ πατρί,
πέδας τε χειροῖν καὶ ποδοῖν ξυνωρίδα.
983 ἐκτείνατ᾽ αὐτὸ καὶ κύκλῳ παρασταδὸν
983a <ἀμήχανον τέχνημα καὶ δυσέκδυτον>
984 στέγαστρον ἀνδρὸς δείξαθ᾽, ὡς ἴδῃ πατήρ—
985 οὐχ οὑμός, ἀλλ᾽ ὁ πάντ᾽ ἐποπτεύων τάδε—
987 ὡς ἂν παρῇ μοι μάρτυς ἐν δίκῃ ποτὲ
ὡς τόνδ᾽ ἐγὼ μετῆλθον ἐνδίκως μόρον
τὸν μητρός· Αἰγίσθου γὰρ οὐ λέγω μόρον·
990 ἔχει γὰρ αἰσχυντῆρος, ὡς νόμος, δίκην.
997 τί νιν προσειπὼν ἂν τύχοιμ᾽ ἂν εὐστομῶν;
ἄγρευμα θηρός, ἢ νεκροῦ ποδένδυτον

978 *ἀθλίῳ* Auratus or Portus: *ἀθλίως* M.

983 *αὐτὸ* Auratus: *αὐτὸν* M.

983a = Aesch. fr. 375 R (Σ Euripides *Orestes* 25): tentatively placed here by West.

983a *τέχνημα . . . δυσέκδυτον* Nauck: *τεύχημα . . . δυσέκλυτον* codd. of Euripides.

{986} Ἥλιος, *ἄναγνα μητρὸς ἔργα τῆς ἐμῆς* M: del. Barrett.

989 *λέγω* Σ^{M}: *ψέγω* M.

990 *νόμος* Auratus, Canter: *νόμου* M.

997–1004 transposed by Proctor to precede 991.

997 *προσειπὼν ἂν τύχοιμ᾽ ἂν* H. L. Ahrens, cf. Σ^{M} *ἀντὶ ἐπιτύχω εὐθίκτως κακολογήσας*: *προσείπω κἂν τύχω μάλ᾽* M.

their oath has been faithful to its pledges: they joined in an oath to do my wretched father to death and to die together, and that oath has been duly kept. [*Pointing to the robe*] Behold also, you who are hearing of these crimes, the contrivance that imprisoned my wretched father, that fettered his arms and bound his feet together. [*To his attendants*] Spread it out, standing beside it in a circle, and display the device that made him helpless, the garment to cover a man which he could not strip off, in order that the Father may see it—I don't mean *my* father, but him who has been watching over all these events[193]—so that he may one day appear for me in a trial, to testify that I was justified in pursuing this killing of my mother. (I don't count the death of Aegisthus; he has received the due punishment of an adulterer, in accordance with custom.[194]) [*Extending an arm towards the robe, which has now been fully spread out*] What should I call it to hit on the apt word? Something to catch a hunted beast, or a drape to cover a corpse in its

193 i.e. Zeus (as god of the bright sky). An ancient reader took the reference to be to the Sun "who sees and hears all things" (*Odyssey* 11.109), and his gloss was later expanded into an iambic line (986); but Orestes' original intention, before he realized he might be misunderstood as referring to Agamemnon, was to say πατήρ *tout court*, and the only god who can be spoken of as πατήρ *tout court*, without naming him and without reference to any children of his, is Zeus. See West, *Studies* 262–3 (reporting or developing an insight of W. S. Barrett).

194 An adulterer (though only, strictly speaking, if caught in the act) could be summarily killed by the head of the household of the woman he had seduced. See Lysias 1 *passim*; Demosthenes 23.53.

δροίτης κατασκήνωμα; δίκτυον μὲν οὖν
ἄρκυν τ᾽ ἂν εἴποις καὶ ποδιστῆρας πέπλους.
τοιοῦτον ἂν κτήσαιτο φιλήτης ἀνήρ,
ξένων ἀπαιόλημα κἀργυροστερῆ
βίον νομίζων· τῷδε τἂν δολώματι
πολλοὺς ἀναιρῶν πολλὰ θερμαίνοι φρένα.
ἥτις δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀνδρὶ τοῦτ᾽ ἐμήσατο στύγος,
ἐξ οὗ τέκνων ἤνεγχ᾽ ὑπὸ ζώνην βάρος,
φίλον τέως, νῦν δ᾽ ἐχθρόν, ὡς φαίνει, δάκος—
τί σοι δοκεῖ; μύραινά γ᾽ εἴτ᾽ ἔχιδν᾽ ἔφυ,
σήπειν θιγοῦσ᾽ ἂν †ἄλλον οὐ† δεδηγμένον,
τόλμης ἔκατι κἀκδίκου φρονήματος;
τοιάδ᾽ ἐμοὶ ξύνοικος ἐν δόμοισι μὴ
γένοιτ᾽· ὀλοίμην πρόσθεν ἐκ θεῶν ἄπαις.

1000 τ᾽ Hermann: δ᾽ M.
1001 τοιοῦτον ἂν Turnebus: τοιοῦτο μὰν M.
1003 νομίζων Turnebus: νομίζω M.
1004 φρένα Lobeck: φρενί M.
992 ἐξ οὗ Robortello: ἐκ σοῦ M.
992 ἤνεγχ᾽ (ἤνεγκ᾽) Turnebus: ην ἔχη M^s (τέκνων—βάρος om. M).
993 δάκος Sommerstein (δακόν A. Y. Campbell): κακόν M.
994 γ᾽ εἴτ᾽ Hermann: γ᾽ ἤτ᾽ M^s: τ᾽ ἤτ᾽ M.
995 θιγοῦσ᾽ ἂν Hermann: θιγοῦσαν M.
995 ἄλλον οὐ M: μᾶλλον οὐ Hermann: perh. ἄνδρα μὴ (cf. Σ^M τὸν μὴ δηχθέντα).
996 κἀκδίκου H. L. Ahrens: κἀνδίκου M.
1006 πρόσθεν Turnebus: πρόσθ᾽ M.

coffin,[195] feet and all? No, you should call it a net, a snare, a hobbling-robe. This is the sort of thing that a footpad might get for himself, a man who led a life of beguiling travellers and robbing them of their money;[196] with this treacherous device, you know, he could do away with many men and delight[197] his heart greatly. But the woman who contrived this hateful device against her husband, when she had borne the weight of his children beneath her girdle—children who were once her friends[198] but are now, as they have shown, her deadly enemies[199]—what do you think of her? That if she were a moray-eel or a viper, she would make a man rot by her mere touch even though he had not been bitten,[200] such was her audacity and the wickedness of her mind? May I never have such a wife as that in my house: I would sooner die by the gods' hand, childless!

195 The same word (δροίτη) is used in *Ag.* 1540 and *Eum.* 633 to denote the bathtub in which Agamemnon was killed.

196 Since this man is a murderer (ἀναιρῶν 1004) as well as a robber, we are probably meant to assume that he would lure travellers into his house, ensnare them in the robe (perhaps, as in Agamemnon's case, after a bath), kill them and take their money. Such a figure would bear considerable resemblance to the criminals, preying on travellers, whom Theseus killed on his way from Trozen to Athens (Diodorus Siculus 4.59.2–5; Plutarch, *Theseus* 8–11), especially Procrustes.

197 lit. "warm".

198 In infancy, before she had wronged them.

199 lit. "a hostile deadly creature", recalling the snake of Clytaemestra's dream.

200 Certain kinds of snake were believed to be capable of doing this (see e.g. [Aristotle], *On Marvellous Things Heard* 845b16–32).

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. αἰαῖ αἰαῖ μελέων ἔργων·
στυγερῷ θανάτῳ διεπράχθης.
ἒ ἔ,
μίμνοντι δὲ καὶ πάθος ἀνθεῖ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔδρασεν ἢ οὐκ ἔδρασε; μαρτυρεῖ δέ μοι
φάρος τόδ', ὡς ἔβαψεν Αἰγίσθου ξίφος·
φόνου δὲ κηκὶς ξὺν χρόνῳ ξυμβάλλεται
πολλὰς βαφὰς φθείρουσα τοῦ ποικίλματος.
νῦν αὐτὸν αἰνῶ, νῦν ἀποιμώζω παρὼν
πατροκτόνον θ' ὕφασμα προσφωνῶν τόδε·
ἀλγῶ μὲν ἔργα καὶ πάθος γένος τε πᾶν,
ἄζηλα νίκης τῆσδ' ἔχων μιάσματα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. οὐδεὶς μερόπων ἀσινῆ βίοτον
διὰ πάντ' ἀτίτης ἂν ἀμείψαι·
ἒ ἔ,
μόχθος δ' ὁ μὲν αὐτίχ', ὁ δ' ἤξει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' ὡς ἂν εἰδῆτ'—οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ὅπῃ τελεῖ,

1019 *ἀτίτης ἂν ἀμείψαι* Garvie (*ἀτίτης* Heimsoeth, *ἀμείψαι* Bothe): *ἄτιμος ἀμείψεται* M.

1020 ἒ ἔ Klausen: *ἐς* M.

1020 *ἤξει* Turnebus: *ἦξε* M^{s} (M^{ac} in this line has only *μόχθο* [sic]).

1021 *ἀλλ' ὡς ἂν* Blomfield, *εἰδῆτ'* Martin, *οὐ γὰρ* Erfurdt: *ἄλλος ἂν εἰ δὴ τόντ' ἄρ* M.

CHORUS

Aiai, aiai, for these sorrowful deeds!
You were done away with by a loathsome death—
ah, ah!—
and for him who remains, suffering is coming into flower!

ORESTES

Did she do it or did she not? This garment is my witness to how it was dyed by Aegisthus' sword;[201] and the stain of blood, joining with the lapse of time, has contributed to ruining many of the dyes in the embroidery. Now I can praise the man, now I can fully lament him, being present here and addressing this woven garment that killed my father. I do grieve[202] for her deeds, and for her suffering, and for my whole family, having acquired an unenviable pollution from this victory.

CHORUS

No mortal can complete his life
unharmed and unpunished throughout—
ah, ah!
Some troubles are here now, some will come later.

ORESTES

Now, so that you may know—for I have no idea how this

201 Since, as Aeschylus presents the story, Aegisthus took no active part in Agamemnon's murder, this passage must be taken as implying that he lent his sword to Clytaemestra (who, as a woman, would not own one herself).

202 lit. "I grieve on the one hand", contrasting his grief over the whole situation with something else which he does not articulate explicitly, probably his continuing certainty (cf. 1027) that he has acted justly.

ὥσπερ ξὺν ἵπποις ἡνιοστροφῶν δρόμου
ἐξωτέρω· φέρουσι γὰρ νικώμενον
φρένες δύσαρκτοι, πρὸς δὲ καρδίᾳ Φόβος
ἄδειν ἕτοιμος ἡδ' ὑπορχεῖσθαι Κότῳ—
ἕως δ' ἔτ' ἔμφρων εἰμί, κηρύσσω φίλοις
κτανεῖν τέ φημι μητέρ' οὐκ ἄνευ δίκης,
πατροκτόνον μίασμα καὶ θεῶν στύγος·
καὶ φίλτρα τόλμης τῆσδε πλειστηρίζομαι
τὸν πυθόμαντιν Λοξίαν, χρήσαντ' ἐμοὶ
πράξαντα μὲν ταῦτ' ἐκτὸς αἰτίας κακῆς
εἶναι, παρέντα δ'—οὐκ ἐρῶ τὴν ζημίαν·
τόξῳ γὰρ οὐδεὶς πημάτων ἐφίξεται.
καὶ νῦν ὁρᾶτέ μ', ὡς παρεσκευασμένος
ξὺν τῷδε θαλλῷ καὶ στέφει προσίξομαι
μεσόμφαλόν θ' ἵδρυμα, Λοξίου πέδον,
πυρός τε φέγγος ἄφθιτον κεκλημένον,
φεύγων τόδ' αἷμα κοινόν· οὐδ' ἐφ' ἑστίαν
ἄλλην τραπέσθαι Λοξίας ἐφίετο.
τάδ' ἐν χρόνῳ μοι πάντας Ἀργείους λέγω
<μνήμῃ φυλάσσειν> ὡς ἐπορσύνθη κακά,
καὶ μαρτυρεῖν μοι, Μενέλεως <ἐὰν μόλῃ>·

1022 ἡνιοστροφῶν Weil: ἡνιοστρόφου M.
1026 ἕως δ' ἔτ' Robortello, Turnebus: ἕως δέ τ' M^s: om. M.
1031 πράξαντα Portus: πράξαντι M.
1033 ἐφίξεται Schütz (cf. Σ^M ἐφικέσθαι): προσίξεται M.
1038 ἐφ' ἑστίαν Turnebus: ἐφέστιον M.
1041a-b so arranged by Franz: καὶ μαρτυρεῖν μοι μενέλεως ἐπορσύνθη κακά M: <μνήμῃ φυλάσσειν> suppl. Wilamowitz, ὡς Franz, <ἐὰν μόλῃ> Croiset.

will end; I am already, as a horse-driver might say, chariioteering somewhat off the track; my mind is almost out of control and carrying me along half-overpowered, and Terror is near my heart, ready to sing and to dance to Wrath's tune[203]—but while I still have my wits, I make proclamation to my friends and say that it was not without justice that I killed my mother, the polluted murderer of my father, hated by the gods. And as my prime inducement to dare this deed I name Loxias, the prophet god of Pytho, whose oracle told me that if I did it I would be free from guilt and blame, but if I failed to—I shall not speak of the punishment: no archer could reach that height of suffering.[204] And now see me, how, accoutred with this wreathed olive-branch, I will go as a suppliant to Loxias' domain, his abode at the central navel of earth,[205] and to the light of the fire that is called immortal,[206] fleeing this kindred bloodshed: to no other hearth than that did Loxias bid me direct myself. I call on all Argives ‹to preserve in memory› for me, as time goes by, how these evils were brought to pass, and to bear witness for me ‹if› Menelaus ‹comes

203 The wrath in question is that of Clytaemestra's spirit against her killer (cf. 40–41), presently to be embodied in her "wrathful hounds" (924, 1054), the terrifying Furies.

204 This metaphor is chosen because an arrow shot from a bow could fly higher in the air than anything else man had invented in Aeschylus' time (or in Virgil's: cf. *Georgics* 2.123–5).

205 The "navel-stone" (ὀμφαλός) in the ἄδυτον at Delphi was thought to mark the centre of the earth.

206 An eternal flame was kept burning in the temple at Delphi (Plutarch, *On the E at Delphi* 385c).

φεύγω δ' ἀλήτης τῆσδε γῆς ἀπόξενος,
ζῶν καὶ τεθνηκὼς τάσδε κληδόνας λιπών,
< >.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὖ γ' ἔπραξας, μηδ' ἐπιζευχθῇς στόμα
φήμῃ πονηρᾷ μηδ' ἐπιγλωσσῶ κακά·
ἠλευθέρωσας πᾶσαν Ἀργείων πόλιν,
δυοῖν δρακόντοιν εὐπετῶς τεμὼν κάρα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἆ ἆ·
σμοιαὶ γυναῖκες αἵδε Γοργόνων δίκην,
φαϊοχίτωνες καὶ πεπλεκτανημέναι
πυκνοῖς δράκουσιν· οὐκέτ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.

1042 φεύγω Weil: ἐγὼ M.
1043/4 lacuna posited by Hermann: perh. e.g. <ἄποινα πατρὸς μητέρ' ὡς κατέκτανον> (cf. Ag. 1281).
1044 γ' (γε) Portus, ἔπραξας Heath, Tyrwhitt: τε πράξας M.
1044 ἐπιζευχθῇς Heath: ἐπιζεύχθη M.
1045 φήμῃ Heath: φῆμαι M.
1046 ἠλευθέρωσας Blomfield: ἐλευθερώσας M.
1046 Ἀργείων *m*: Ἀργείην M.
1048 σμοιαὶ West (δμοιαὶ Lobel): δμωαὶ M.
1050 ἂν μείναιμ' *t*: ἀμμείνοιμ' M.

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207 M has here lost parts of two successive lines; restorations are far from secure. In the *Odyssey* (3.309–312; cf. too Euripides, *Electra* 1278–81 and *Orestes* 52–56) Menelaus is said to have arrived home very shortly after the death of Clytaemestra and

home>.[207] Now I go into exile, a wanderer banished from this land,[208] leaving behind me, in life and in death, this reputation—<that in revenge for my father I killed my mother>.[209]

CHORUS

No, you have done well! Don't harness your lips to harmful speech, and don't give utterance to ill-omened words. You have liberated the entire city of Argos by deftly cutting off the heads of that pair of serpents.

ORESTES [*in sudden and intense terror*]

Ah, ah! I see these hideous women looking like Gorgons—clad in dark-grey tunics[210] and thickly wreathed with serpents![211] I can't stay here!

Aegisthus. Presumably in the lost satyr-drama *Proteus* the seer Proteus will have given Menelaus predictions and instructions about his return (cf. *Odyssey* 4.543–7), but we do not know how precise these were—and those watching the first performance of *Libation-Bearers* will not have known this either.

208 This line almost exactly repeats *Ag.* 1282, which referred to Orestes' time in exile *before* he returned to take his revenge.

209 I translate my tentative restoration, which cannot be very far from the sense of the lost line: the plural τάσδε κληδόνας makes it likely that Orestes mentioned *two* features of the reputation he would leave behind him, and the chorus's response makes it likely that he laid the stress on the feature that weighed against him.

210 Like the Furies on several vase-paintings from the third quarter of the fifth century; see Prag pll. 30a,b, 32a.

211 In their hair (like Gorgons; cf. *Prom.* 798–800) and/or around their arms; see Prag pll. 31a,b, 32a.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίνες σε δόξαι, φίλτατ' ἀνθρώπων πατρί,
στροβοῦσιν; ἴσχε, μὴ φοβοῦ, νικῶν πολύ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ εἰσὶ δόξαι τῶνδε πημάτων ἐμοί·
σαφῶς γὰρ αἵδε μητρὸς ἔγκοτοι κύνες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποταίνιον γὰρ αἷμά σοι χεροῖν ἔτι·
ἐκ τῶνδέ τοι ταραγμὸς εἰς φρένας πίτνει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, αἵδε πληθύουσι δή,
κἀξ ὀμμάτων στάζουσι νᾶμα δυσφιλές.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἷς σοι καθαρμός· Λοξίας δὲ προσθιγὼν
ἐλεύθερόν σε τῶνδε πημάτων κτίσει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὑμεῖς μὲν οὐχ ὁρᾶτε τάσδ', ἐγὼ δ' ὁρῶ·
ἐλαύνομαι δὴ κοὐκέτ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης, καί σ' ἐποπτεύων πρόφρων
θεὸς φυλάσσοι καιρίοισι συμφοραῖς.

1057 πληθύουσι Turnebus: πληθύουσαι M.
1058 στάζουσι νᾶμα Burges: στάζουσιν αἷμα M.
1059 εἷς σοι Erfurdt: εἰσσ' ὁ M^{pc}: εἰσω M^{ac}.
1059 Λοξίας Auratus: Λοξίου M.

CHORUS

Dearest of men to your father, what are these fancies that are whirling you about? Hold firm, don't be afraid—you have won a great victory!

ORESTES

These afflictions are no fancies I am having: these are plainly my mother's wrathful hounds!

CHORUS

Ah, the blood is still fresh on your hands; that, you see, is the cause of this confusion falling on your mind.

ORESTES

Lord Apollo, there are more and more of them! And they're dripping a loathsome fluid from their eyes!

CHORUS

There is only one way you can be purified: Loxias, by laying his hand on you, will set you free from these sufferings.

ORESTES

You don't see these creatures, I do! I'm being driven, driven away! I can't stay here! [*He staggers off, in the same direction from which he entered at the start of the play.*]

CHORUS

May you prosper, and may god willingly watch over you and protect you with timely strokes of fortune!

1062 δ᾽ὴ West: δὲ M.
1062 ἂν *μείναιμ᾽* Robortello: *ἀμμείναιμ᾽* M.

ὅδε τοι μελάθροις τοῖς βασιλείοις
τρίτος αὖ χειμὼν
πνεύσας γονίας ἐτελέσθη.
παιδοβόροι μὲν πρῶτον ὑπῆρξαν
μόχθοι τάλανες·
δεύτερον ἀνδρὸς βασίλεια πάθη,
λουτροδάικτος δ' ὤλετ' Ἀχαιῶν
πολέμαρχος ἀνήρ·
νῦν αὖ τρίτος ἦλθέ ποθεν σωτήρ—
ἢ μόρον εἴπω;
ποῖ δῆτα κρανεῖ, ποῖ καταλήξει
μετακοιμισθὲν μένος ἄτης;

1067 πνεύσας Scaliger: πνεούσας M.
1068 παιδοβόροι Auratus: παιδόμοροι M.
1069 τάλανες Hermann: τάλανες τε Θυέστου M.
1073 αὖ West: δ' αὖ M.

See, this is now the third tempest
that has blown like a squall[212]
upon the royal house, and come to an end.
What first began it were the sad sufferings
of him who devoured his children;
the second time the victim was a man, a king,
as, slain in his bath, there perished the man
who led the Achaeans in war;
and now again, thirdly, there has come from somewhere
a saviour[213]—
or should I say, death?
So where will it end, where will the power of Ruin
sink into sleep and cease?

[212] The word γονίας occurs only here, apart from a few single-word lexicographical citations; but the ending -ίας is typical of nouns denoting winds, and there is no adequate reason to doubt the scholiast's explanation. "a dangerous wind that arises [suddenly, one presumes] after fine weather".

[213] Yet another allusion to the third libation offered to Zeus Soter (see on 578).

EUMENIDES

ΕΥΜΕΝΙΔΕΣ

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΠΥΘΙΑ
ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΕΡΙΝΥΩΝ
ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΠΡΟΠΟΜΠΩΝ

ΠΥΘΙΑ

Πρῶτον μὲν εὐχῇ τῇδε πρεσβεύω θεῶν
τὴν πρωτόμαντιν Γαῖαν· ἐκ δὲ τῆς Θέμιν,
ἣ δὴ τὸ μητρὸς δευτέρα τόδ' ἔζετο
μαντεῖον, ὡς λόγος τις· ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ

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1 S. Scullion, *Three Studies in Athenian Dramaturgy* (Stuttgart, 1994) 77–86, argues that the imaginary location remains on the Acropolis throughout.

2 sc. at Delphi (cf. Pausanias 10.5.5).

EUMENIDES

Characters of the Play

THE PYTHIA, *Apollo's prophetess at Delphi*
ORESTES
APOLLO
THE GHOST OF CLYTAEMESTRA
CHORUS OF FURIES
ATHENA
SECONDARY CHORUS OF THE PROCESSIONAL ESCORT, *comprising the priestess of Athena Polias and her assistants*

Scene: At first, before (and, from line 64, within) the temple of Apollo at Delphi; at line 235 the scene changes to the temple of Athena Polias on the Acropolis at Athens (during the trial of Orestes the scene may be reidentified as the Areopagus, though this is disputed).[1]

Enter, from the side, the PYTHIA.

PYTHIA

First among gods, in this my prayer, I give pride of place to the first of prophets,[2] Earth; and next to her daughter Themis, who, as a tale has it, was the second to occupy this prophetic seat which had been her mother's. The third to

λάχει, θελούσης, οὐδὲ πρὸς βίαν τινός,
Τιτανὶς ἄλλη παῖς Χθονὸς καθέζετο
Φοίβη· δίδωσιν δ' ἣ γενέθλιον δόσιν
Φοίβῳ· τὸ Φοίβης δ' ὄνομ' ἔχει παρώνυμον.
λιπὼν δὲ λίμνην Δηλίαν τε χοιράδα,
κέλσας ἐπ' ἀκτὰς ναυπόρους τὰς Παλλάδος,
εἰς τήνδε γαῖαν ἦλθε Παρνησσοῦ θ' ἕδρας·
πέμπουσι δ' αὐτὸν καὶ σεβίζουσιν μέγα
κελευθοποιοὶ παῖδες Ἡφαίστου, χθόνα
ἀνήμερον τιθέντες ἡμερωμένην.
μολόντα δ' αὐτὸν κάρτα τιμαλφεῖ λεὼς
Δελφός τε χώρας τῆσδε πρυμνήτης ἄναξ·
τέχνης δέ νιν Ζεὺς ἔνθεον κτίσας φρένα
ἵζει τέταρτον τοῖσδε μάντιν ἐν θρόνοις·
Διὸς προφήτης δ' ἐστὶ Λοξίας πατρός.

11 Παρνησσοῦ θ' Turnebus: Παρνησούς θ' vel sim. M^{pc} *f*: παρανησοῦσθ' M^{ac}.
18 τοῖσδε Bourdelot: τόνδε codd.
18 θρόνοις Turnebus: χρόνοις codd.

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3 Emphasizing sharply the contrast between this story and the traditional tale told at Delphi and elsewhere, according to which Apollo took control of the shrine by force from a chthonic precursor, either a serpent (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 300–374) or a goddess, Earth or Themis (e.g. Pindar fr. 55; Euripides, *Iphigeneia in Tauris* 1234–83).

4 Who was her grandson, his mother Leto being the daughter of Phoebe (Hesiod, *Theogony* 404–8).

5 i.e. Apollo took the additional name Phoebus in honour of his grandmother and in gratitude for her gift.

have the seat assigned to her—with her predecessor's consent, and not by the use of force against anyone[3]—was another Titaness and child of Earth, Phoebe; and she gave it as a birthday gift to Phoebus,[4] who bears Phoebe's name as an addition to his own.[5] Leaving the pool[6] and rocky isle of Delos, and coming to land on Pallas's shores where ships put in,[7] he came to this land and his abode below Mount Parnassus; he was escorted, and shown great reverence, by the road-making children of Hephaestus,[8] who turned an untamed land into a tamed one. When he came here, he was greatly honoured by our people, and by Delphus, the king and helmsman of this land; and Zeus caused his mind to be inspired with seercraft, and installed him on the throne here[9] as its fourth prophet. Loxias is thus the spokesman of his father Zeus. These are the gods whom I

6 Referring to the "round pool" (τροχοειδὴς λίμνη) beside which Apollo was said to have been born, north of his temple on Delos.

7 i.e. at a harbour in Attica. The more usual tradition was that Apollo had landed in Boeotia (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 223; Pindar fr. 286); for this Athenian variant, cf. Ephorus, *FGrH* 70 F 31b. This is the first mention of Athens, or of Athena, in the trilogy.

8 The first of a series of similar sobriquets applied to the Athenians in this play; their first king, Erichthonius, had been (inadvertently) fathered by Hephaestus (Euripides fr. 925; schol. *Iliad* 2.547). The road they made was that "by which the Athenians now send their sacred embassy to the Pythian festival" (Ephorus loc.cit.); according to the scholia here, when such embassies travelled along the road, they were preceded by men carrying axes "as though to tame the land".

9 The "throne" is the mantic tripod on which the Pythia herself sat to speak in Apollo's name.

τούτους μὲν εὐχαῖς φροιμιάζομαι θεούς,
Παλλὰς προναία δ' ἐν λόγοις πρεσβεύεται·
σέβω δὲ νύμφας, ἔνθα Κωρυκὶς πέτρα
κοίλη, φίλορνις, δαιμόνων ἀναστροφαί·
Βρόμιος δ' ἔχει τὸν χῶρον, οὐδ' ἀμνημονῶ,
ἐξ οὗτε Βάκχαις ἐστρατήγησεν θεός,
λαγὼ δίκην Πενθεῖ καταρράψας μόρον·
Πλειστοῦ δὲ πηγὰς καὶ Ποσειδῶνος κράτος
καλοῦσα καὶ τέλειον ὕψιστον Δία
ἔπειτα μάντις εἰς θρόνους καθιζάνω.
καὶ νῦν τυχεῖν με τῶν πρὶν εἰσόδων μακρῷ
ἄριστα δοῖεν· κεἰ πάρ' Ἕλλήνων τινές,
ἴτων πάλῳ λαχόντες, ὡς νομίζεται·
μαντεύομαι γὰρ ὡς ἂν ἡγῆται θεός.

ἦ δεινὰ λέξαι, δεινὰ δ' ὀφθαλμοῖς δρακεῖν,
παλίν μ' ἔπεμψεν ἐκ δόμων τῶν Λοξίου,

20 μὲν Blaydes: ἐν codd.
27 Πλειστοῦ (Πλείστου) Turnebus: πλείστους M^{pc} *f*: πλήστους M^{ac}.
27 δὲ Blaydes: τε codd.

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10 The Pythia is distinguishing between, on the one hand, the past and present possessors of the Delphic shrine itself, to whom she *prays*, and other divinities worshipped in its neighbourhood, of whom she will merely make honourable *mention*.

11 Whose temple stood about a mile (1600m) east of Apollo's.

12 This cave is high up on Mount Parnassus above Delphi.

address in my preliminary prayer. Among those whom I mention,[10] Pallas Pronaia[11] has pride of place. I also honour the Nymphs whose home is the Corycian cave,[12] loved by birds, haunt of divinities; nor do I forget that Bromius[13] has dwelt in this place ever since he led his Bacchants in battle and netted Pentheus in death[14] like a hare. I call also on the stream of Pleistus,[15] and on mighty Poseidon,[16] and on Zeus the Most High, Zeus the Fulfiller, and having done so I go to take my seat on the prophetic throne. Now may these gods grant me far better fortune than on any of my previous entrances into the shrine! And if any Greeks are present, let them approach in an order determined by lot, as is the custom; for I prophesy as the god guides me.

[*She goes into the temple. A moment later she comes out again, terrified, crawling on hands and knees like a baby. It is some time before she can speak.*]

Things truly fearful to speak of, fearful to behold with the eyes, have driven me back out of the house of Loxias; they

13 "The Noisy One", a common epithet of Dionysus. He was thought to reside at Delphi during the winter months when Apollo was absent.

14 lit. "stitched death over Pentheus". Elsewhere (e.g. in Aeschylus' own plays about Pentheus, as well as Euripides' *Bacchae*) Pentheus' death is always placed on Mount Cithaeron south of Thebes.

15 The river which flows in the gorge below Delphi.

16 Poseidon had an altar within the temple of Apollo (Pausanias 10.24.4); he was also, according to a scholium on line 16 (citing an ancient commentator on Callimachus' *Aetia*), the father of Delphus and therefore the ancestor of the Delphian people.

ὡς μήτε σωκεῖν μήτε μ' ἀκταίνειν στάσιν·
τρέχω δὲ χερσίν, οὐ ποδωκείᾳ σκελῶν.
δείσασα γὰρ γραῦς οὐδέν, ἀντίπαις μὲν οὖν.
ἐγὼ μὲν ἕρπω πρὸς πολυστεφῆ μυχόν·
ὁρῶ δ' ἐπ' ὀμφαλῷ μὲν ἄνδρα θεομυσῆ
ἕδρας ἔχοντα προστρόπαιον, αἵματι
στάζοντα χεῖρας καὶ νεοσπαδὲς ξίφος
ἔχοντ' ἐλαίας θ' ὑψιγέννητον κλάδον
λήνει μεγίστῳ σωφρόνως ἐστεμμένον,
ἀργῆτι μαλλῷ· τῇδε γὰρ τρανῶς ἐρῶ.
πρόσθεν δὲ τἀνδρὸς τοῦδε θαυμαστὸς λόχος
εὕδει γυναικῶν ἐν θρόνοισιν ἥμενος—
οὔτοι γυναῖκας, ἀλλὰ Γοργόνας λέγω·
οὐδ' αὖτε Γοργείοισιν εἰκάσω τύποις.
εἶδόν ποτ' ἤδη Φινέως γεγραμμένας
δεῖπνον φερούσας· ἄπτεροί γε μὴν ἰδεῖν
αὗται, μέλαιναι δ', εἰς τὸ πᾶν βδελύκτροποι·
ῥέγκουσι δ' οὐ πλατοῖσι φυσιάμασιν,
ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων λείβουσι δυσφιλῆ λίβα·
καὶ κόσμος οὔτε πρὸς θεῶν ἀγάλματα
φέρειν δίκαιος οὔτ' ἐς ἀνθρώπων στέγας.

36 στάσιν M *f*: τάσιν E^{ssecr}: βάσιν γρM^{s}.
53 πλατοῖσι Elmsley: πλαστοῖσι codd. 54 λίβα Burges, cf. Σ^{E} αἱματηρὰν σταλαγμόν: δία M: βίαν *f*.

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17 The inner shrine (ἄδυτον) at Delphi was decorated with many laurel wreaths and fillets of wool, as were the tripod and the navel-stone; these decorations are often visible on vase-paintings

have taken away my strength and made me unable to stand upright, so that I run on my hands instead of making speed with my legs! A frightened old woman is nothing—or rather no better than a little child! [*Becoming slightly more composed*] I am on my way to the inner shrine richly hung with wreaths,[17] and there I see a man sitting at the navel-stone as a suppliant for purification, a man polluted in the eyes of the gods, his hands dripping blood, holding a newly-drawn sword and a tall-grown olive branch reverently adorned with a very long wreath of wool, of snow-white fleece (by speaking this way I shall make myself clear). In front of this man there is an extraordinary band of women, asleep, sitting on chairs—no, I won't call them women, but Gorgons; but then I can't liken their form to that of Gorgons either. I did once see before now, in a painting, female creatures[18] robbing Phineus of his dinner; these ones, though, it is plain to see, don't have wings, and they're black[19] and utterly nauseating. They're pumping out snores that one doesn't dare come near,[20] and dripping a loathsome drip from their eyes. And their attire is one that it's not proper to bring either before the images of the gods or under the roofs of men.[21] I have never seen the

showing Orestes at Delphi (e.g. *LIMC* Orestes 23 = Leto 70; Erinys 46, 51, 64). [18] The Harpies, who were eventually driven away or killed by two of the Argonauts, Zetes and Calaïs (see on *Phineus* in the Fragments volume).

[19] Black-faced, that is, as well as black-clad; cf. Euripides, *Electra* 1345, *Orestes* 321, 408. [20] This may be taken as referring to the frightening sound, or the smell of their breath, or both. [21] The Erinyes' dark garments are such as would normally be worn only in token of mourning, and one would never enter a temple, especially of Apollo (cf. *Ag.* 1075, 1079), so dressed.

τὸ φῦλον οὐκ ὄπωπα τῆσδ' ὁμιλίας,
οὐδ' ἥτις αἶα τοῦτ' ἐπεύχεται γένος
τρέφουσ' ἀνατεὶ μὴ μεταστένειν πόνον.
τἀντεῦθεν ἤδη τῶνδε δεσπότῃ δόμων
αὐτῷ μελέσθω Λοξίᾳ μεγασθενεῖ·
ἰατρόμαντις δ' ἐστὶ καὶ τερασκόπος
καὶ τοῖσιν ἄλλοις δωμάτων καθάρσιος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, οἶσθα μὲν τὸ μὴ ἀδικεῖν·
ἐπεὶ δ' ἐπιστᾷ, καὶ τὸ μὴ ἀμελεῖν μάθε.
σθένος δὲ ποιεῖν εὖ φερέγγυον τὸ σόν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

οὔτοι προδώσω· διὰ τέλους δέ σοι φύλαξ
ἐγγὺς παρεστὼς καὶ πρόσωθ' ἀποστατῶν
ἐχθροῖσι τοῖς σοῖς οὐ γενήσομαι πέπων.
καὶ νῦν ἀλούσας τάσδε τὰς μάργους ὁρᾷς·
ὕπνῳ πεσοῦσαι δ' αἱ κατάπτυστοι κόραι
γραῖαι, παλαιαὶ παῖδες, αἷς οὐ μείγνυται

59 *πόνον* Arnaldus: *πόνων* codd.
85–87 transposed by Burges to precede 64.
65 *πρόσωθ'* Musgrave: *πρόσω δ'* codd.

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22 Line 140 shows that no less, and probably no more, than three sleeping Furies were visible in this scene. Three may already have been the canonical number of the Furies, though not textually attested until Euripides' *Orestes* (408, 1650); at least one of them (Teiso = Teisiphone) appears to have been named individually in a play of Sophocles (fr. 743). If so, the audience is likely to

tribe to which this company belongs, nor do I know what country boasts that it has reared this race without harm to itself and does not regret the labour of doing so. From now on, let this be the concern of the master of this house himself, mighty Loxias, since he is a healer and seer, a diviner, and a purifier of the houses of others.

[*The* PYTHIA *leaves, by the side from which she had originally entered. The* ekkyklēma *is then rolled out of the main door. On it is* ORESTES *in a suppliant posture at the navel-stone, still with his sword and wreathed olive-branch, and facing him three*[22] FURIES *slumped in sleep on chairs.*]

ORESTES

Lord Apollo, you know how to avoid doing wrong. Since you understand that, learn also how not to be uncaring. Your power is amply sufficient to help me.

[*APOLLO appears out of the darkness, at the rear of the* ekkyklēma *platform.*[23]]

APOLLO

I will not betray you: I will be your guardian to the end, whether standing close to you or a long way off, and I will not be soft towards your enemies. Even now you see these madwomen taken captive: fallen in sleep, these abominable old maidens, these aged virgins, with whom no god

be taken by surprise when in due course a whole chorus of them comes on stage. See A. M. Dale, *Collected Papers* (Cambridge, 1969) 123–4.

[23] This treatment of Apollo's entrance was proposed by P. E. Easterling (*ap.* A. L. Brown, *JHS* 102 [1982] 29).

θεῶν τις οὐδ' ἄνθρωπος οὐδὲ θήρ ποτε—
κακῶν δ' ἔκατι κἀγένοντ', ἐπεὶ κακὸν
σκότον νέμονται Τάρταρόν θ' ὑπὸ χθονός,
μισήματ' ἀνδρῶν καὶ θεῶν Ὀλυμπίων.
ὅμως δὲ φεῦγε, μηδὲ μαλθακὸς γένῃ·
ἐλῶσι γάρ σε καὶ δι' ἠπείρου μακρᾶς
†βεβῶντ'† ἀν' αἰεὶ τὴν πλανοστιβῆ χθόνα
ὑπέρ τε πόντου καὶ περιρρύτας πόλεις.
καὶ μὴ πρόκαμνε τόνδε βουκολούμενος
πόνον, μολὼν δὲ Παλλάδος ποτὶ πτόλιν
ἵζου παλαιὸν ἄγκαθεν λαβὼν βρέτας·
κἀκεῖ δικαστὰς τῶνδε καὶ θελκτηρίους
μύθους ἔχοντες μηχανὰς εὑρήσομεν
ὥστ' εἰς τὸ πᾶν σε τῶνδ' ἀπαλλάξαι πόνων·
καὶ γὰρ κτανεῖν σ' ἔπεισα μητρῷον δέμας.
μέμνησο, μὴ φοβός σε νικάτω φρένας·
σὺ δ', αὐτάδελφον αἷμα καὶ κοινοῦ πατρὸς,
Ἑρμῆ, φύλασσε, κάρτα δ' ὢν ἐπώνυμος
πομπαῖος ἴσθι, τόνδε ποιμαίνων ἐμὸν

76 *βεβῶντ' ἂν* M: *βεβόντ' ἂν f*: *βιβῶντ'* Stephanus, *ἀν'* Hermann: perh. *προβῶντ' ἀν'*.

77 *πόντον* Turnebus: *πόντου* codd.

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24 *μείγνυται* is ambiguous (doubtless by design) between "has sexual intercourse with" and "mingles, converses with".

25 The sentence is interrupted by a new thought before the main verb is reached.

ever holds any intercourse,[24] nor man nor beast either[25]—why, they were absolutely born for evil, for they dwell in the evil darkness, in Tartarus beneath the earth, and are hateful to men and to the Olympian gods. Nevertheless, you must flee, and not weaken; for they will drive you right through the length of the mainland, as you go ever forward[26] over the land you tread in your wanderings, and over the water to sea-girt cities. And do not let these labours weigh on your mind to give up the struggle, until you come to the city of Pallas and sit clasping her ancient image[27] in your arms. There we will have judges to judge these matters, and words that will charm, and we will find means to release you from this misery for good and all—for it was I who induced you to kill the woman who was your mother. Remember, do not let terror conquer your mind. And you, my own blood brother, begotten of the same father,[28] Hermes, guard him, and, true to your title,[29] be his escort, shepherding this my suppliant—for Zeus re-

[26] I translate my tentative conjecture *προβῶντ'*: *βεβῶντ'* is a non-existent form, while *βιβῶντ'* would require an adverb (and even then would refer to the gait with which Orestes will walk, not the places he will be going).

[27] The olive-wood cult-image of Athena Polias in her temple on the Acropolis.

[28] The emphasis on the common *paternity* of Apollo and Hermes (they had different mothers, Leto and Maia respectively), which makes them "own blood brother[s]", foreshadows Apollo's later claim (658–666, cf. 606) that a mother is not blood-kin to her child.

[29] For "Escort" (*πομπαῖος*) as a title of Hermes cf. Sophocles, *Ajax* 832; Euripides, *Medea* 759.

ἱκέτην—σέβει τοι Ζεὺς τόδ' ἐκνόμων σέβας—
ὁρμώμενον βροτοῖσιν εὐπόμπῳ τύχῃ.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ

εὕδοιτ' ἄν. ὠή. καὶ καθευδουσῶν τί δεῖ;
ἐγὼ δ' ὑφ' ὑμῶν ὧδ' ἀπητιμασμένη
ἄλλοισιν ἐν νεκροῖσιν, ὧν μὲν ἔκτανον
ὄνειδος ἐν φθιτοῖσιν οὐκ ἐκλείπεται,
αἰσχρῶς δ' ἀλῶμαι· προὐννέπω δ' ὑμῖν ὅτι
ἔχω μεγίστην αἰτίαν κείνων ὕπο,
παθοῦσα δ' οὕτω δεινὰ πρὸς τῶν φιλτάτων
οὐδεὶς ὑπέρ μου δαιμόνων μηνίεται
κατασφαγείσης πρὸς χερῶν μητροκτόνων.
ὅρα δὲ πληγὰς τάσδε καρδίᾳ σέθεν.

96 ὧν Tyrwhitt, cf. ΣME ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐφόνευσα Ἀγαμέμνονα: ὡς codd.

{104–5} εὕδουσα γὰρ φρὴν ὄμμασιν λαμπρύνεται, | ἐν ἡμέρᾳ δὲ μοῖρ' ἀπρόσκοπος (Turnebus, cf. ΣM: μοῖρα πρόσκοπος codd.) βροτῶν: del. Linwood.

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30 ἔκνομος occurs only once elsewhere in tragedy (*Ag.* 1473, where it means "tuneless"); here it appears to mean "someone who is away from home" (contrast ἔννομος "inhabitant", *Supp.* 565).

31 lit. "<who is> sped on his way to mortals with the fortune of a good escort".

spects the sanctity of wayfarers[30] like this one—who will have the blessing of a good escort as he starts his journey back to human society.[31]

[*ORESTES departs on his journey;* APOLLO *withdraws into the* skēnē. *The* GHOST OF CLYTAEMESTRA *appears.*[32]]

GHOST OF CLYTAEMESTRA

[*Sarcastically, seeing the* FURIES *sleeping peacefully*] Do please sleep on! Ahoy! [*They do not stir.*] And what are you good for, asleep? I am shunned in dishonour like this[33] among the other dead, thanks to you. I am unceasingly taunted among the shades because of those I killed, and I wander disgraced; and I proclaim to you that I receive the greatest blame from them because, though I have suffered so grievously at the hands of those closest to me, none of the divinities is wrathful on my behalf, slaughtered as I have been by matricidal hands. [*Displaying her torn and bloodstained garments*] See these wounds with your

32 It is quite uncertain how the ghost's appearance was staged. To have the actor emerge from "underground", via a trapdoor or subterranean passage, is unlikely to have been practicable; even more than three decades later, the ghost of Polydorus in Euripides' *Hecuba* appears *above* the level of the main performing area (cf. *Hecuba* 30–31). An entrance from the *skēnē*, into which Apollo has just withdrawn to re-emerge at 179, might be confusing. It may thus be best to suppose that the actor simply entered by a side-passage (presumably the opposite one to that by which Orestes has just departed).

33 That she is in dishonour is apparent from the fact that she is "wandering disgraced" (98) up on earth, instead of remaining below as an accepted member of underworld society.

ἦ πολλὰ μὲν δὴ τῶν ἐμῶν ἐλείξατε,
χοάς τ' ἀοίνους, νηφάλια μειλίγματα,
καὶ νυκτίσεμνα δεῖπν' ἐπ' ἐσχάρᾳ πυρὸς
ἔθυον, ὥραν οὐδενὸς κοινὴν θεῶν·
καὶ πάντα ταῦτα λὰξ ὁρῶ πατούμενα,
ὁ δ' ἐξαλύξας οἴχεται νεβροῦ δίκην,
καὶ ταῦτα κούφως ἐκ μέσων ἀρκυστάτων
ὤρουσεν, ὑμῖν ἐγκατιλλώψας μέγα.
ἀκούσαθ', ὡς ἔλεξα τῆς ἐμῆς περὶ
ψυχῆς· φρονήσατ', ὦ κατὰ χθονὸς θεαί·
ὄναρ γὰρ ὑμᾶς νῦν Κλυταιμήστρα καλῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

(μυγμός)

107 νηφάλια Robortello, Turnebus: νιφάλια codd.
108 νυκτίσεμνα Turnebus: νυκτὶ (νυκτο Mac, νύκτι E) σεμνὰ codd.
112 ἀρκυστάτων Turnebus: ἀρκυσμάτων codd.
113 ὑμῖν M: ἡμῖν *f*.
113 ἐγκατιλλώψας Turnebus: ἐκκατιλλώψας codd.

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34 Here the manuscripts add two extra lines: "For the sleeping mind is bright with eyes, whereas in daytime mortals' destiny is to have no prevision." The second of these lines is worse than irrelevant (the Furies are not mortals, are not being invited to see the future, and would be able to see Clytaemestra's wounds just as well, if not better, were they awake); and while the first might well in itself be acceptable, it makes so neat an antithesis with the second that one is almost inevitably driven to conclude that the two lines were written to stand together—in which case they were not written to stand here.

heart's eye![34] You have licked up a very great amount indeed of my offerings—wineless drink-offerings, sober gifts of propitiation,[35] and I have also sacrificed solemn nocturnal feasts at a hearth of fire,[36] at a time shared with none of the gods.[37] And all this I see being spurned and trodden underfoot, and *he* has got away, escaped like a hunted fawn, and done it, moreover, by jumping lightly right out of the net, making big mocking eyes at you. Listen to me, for I have been speaking to save my very soul.[38] Take heed, you goddesses from below the earth: I who now call you in your dream, I am Clytaemestra!

The FURIES *make a whining sound.*[39]

35 These two phrases should be taken as synonymous.

36 Sacrifices to chthonic divinities were made not on a raised altar (βωμός) but at a dug-out hearth on the ground (ἐσχάρα).

37 i.e. with none of the *upper-world* gods.

38 Normally περὶ ψυχῆς would mean "for my life, with my life at stake"; but, with Clytaemestra already dead, the phrase is ambiguous between a metaphorical sense "on a matter of vital concern" and a literal, but abnormal, sense "for ‹the welfare of› my soul ‹in Hades›".

39 This sound would be represented in Greek letters as μυ μυ (cf. Aristophanes, *Knights* 10), hence the stage-direction μυγμός in the manuscripts.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ

μύζοιτ' ἄν, ἀνὴρ δ' οἴχεται φυγὼν πρόσω·
†φίλοις γάρ εἰσιν οὐκ ἐμοῖς† προσίκτορες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

(μυγμός)

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ

ἄγαν ὑπνώσσεις κοὐ κατοικτίζεις πάθος·
φονεὺς δ' Ὀρέστης τῆσδε μητρὸς οἴχεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

(ὠγμός)

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ

ὄζεις, ὑπνώσσεις· οὐκ ἀναστήσῃ τάχος;
τί σοι πέπρωται πρᾶγμα πλὴν τεύχειν κακά;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

(ὠγμός)

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ

ὕπνος πόνος τε, κύριοι συνωμόται,
δεινῆς δρακαίνης ἐξεκήραναν μένος.

118 φυγὼν West: φεύγων codd.
119 φίλοις . . . οὐκ ἐμοῖς codd.: φίλων . . . οὐ κενοὶ Dodds.
123 ὠγμός Robortello: μωγμός codd.
125 πέπρωται Stanley: πέπρακται codd.

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40 I translate Dodds's emendation, the only plausible one which keeps the surely correct προσίκτορες and allows it to bear the meaning "suppliants", the only sense in which προσίκτωρ is ever

GHOST OF CLYTAEMESTRA

You may whine, but the man's fled and gone far away: suppliants are not devoid of friends.[40]

The FURIES *whine again.*

GHOST OF CLYTAEMESTRA

You're too full of sleep, and you're taking no pity on my plight; meanwhile Orestes, who murdered me, his mother, has got away!

The FURIES *utter a moaning sound,*[41] *somewhat louder than before.*

GHOST OF CLYTAEMESTRA

You moan, you still sleep—won't you get up, quickly? What activity has destiny allotted you, except doing harm?

The FURIES *moan again.*

GHOST OF CLYTAEMESTRA

Sleep and Toil—an appropriate pair of conspirators[42]—have sapped the strength of the fearsome serpent!

known to have been used (cf. 441). By "friends" Clytaemestra would be referring, of course, primarily to Apollo, but the audience will doubtless also think of Zeus Hikesios (cf. *Supp.* 1, 347, etc.)

41 Represented in Greek letters as ὦ ὦ, whence the stage-direction ὠγμός.

42 Because they are natural associates (toil produces fatigue which produces sleep).

ΧΟΡΟΣ

(μυγμὸς διπλοῦς ὀξύς)

λαβέ, λαβέ, λαβέ, λαβέ· φράζου.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ

ὄναρ διώκεις θῆρα, κλαγγαίνεις δ' ἄπερ
κύων μέριμναν οὔποτ' ἐκλείπων φόνου.
τί δρᾷς; ἀνίστω· μή σε νικάτω πόνος,
μηδ' ἀγνοήσῃς πῆμα μαλθαχθεῖσ' ὕπνῳ.
ἄλγησον ἦπαρ ἐνδίκοις ὀνείδεσιν·
τοῖς σώφροσιν γὰρ ἀντίκεντρα γίγνεται.
σὺ δ' αἱματηρὸν πνεῦμ' ἐπουρίσασα τῷ,
ἀτμῷ κατισχναίνουσα, νηδύος πυρί,
ἔπου, μάραινε δευτέροις διώγμασιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔγειρ', ἔγειρε καὶ σὺ τήνδ', ἐγὼ δέ σέ.
εὕδεις; ἀνίστω, κἀπολακτίσασ' ὕπνον
ἰδώμεθ' εἴ τι τοὔδε φροιμίου ματᾷ.

132 ἐκλείπων Blomfield, φόνου Dawe: ἐκλιπὼν πόνου codd.
137 σὺ δ' Portus: οὐδ' codd.
138 κατισχναίνουσα Robortello, Turnebus: κατισχαίνουσα codd.
142 ἰδώμεθ' Turnebus: εἰδώμεθ' codd.

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43 Imitating the vocalizations of hounds on the trail: they pant (λαβέ, λαβέ) as they pursue their quarry at full speed, and make two loud barks (φράζου) when they catch sight of him.

The FURIES *utter two, much louder, high-pitched short whines.*

FURIES [*in their sleep*]
Get him, get him, get him, get him! See there![43]

GHOST OF CLTAEMESTRA
You are chasing a beast in your dreams, and giving tongue like a hound who can never desist from thinking of blood. What are you doing? Get up! Don't let weariness overcome you, and don't be softened by sleep into unawareness of what you have suffered. Feel a stab of pain in your liver at these well-merited reproaches: to the wise they are like goads.[44] So make your bloody breath blow hard at his back; wither him with your exhalation, with the fire in your belly; follow him, shrivel him up with a second pursuit!

[*The* GHOST *departs. One of the* FURIES *wakes up.*]

FIRST FURY [*nudging her neighbour*]
Wake her—you wake her, as I do you! [*Rising, and going over to the third Fury, who is still asleep*] Are you sleeping? Get up, shake off sleep, and let's see whether that dream-prophecy was wide of the mark at all.[45]

[*The three* FURIES *rise, look about them, and see with horror that* ORESTES *is gone. At their cries more* FURIES *begin*

[44] i.e. well-merited reproaches are, to the wise, a stimulus to action.

[45] lit. "whether anything in that prelude is idle (astray)": the dream is spoken of as a prelude to, or foretaste of, the reality that it apparently betokens.

στρ. α ἰοὺ ἰοὺ ποπάξ· ἐπάθομεν, φίλαι—
— ἦ πολλὰ δὴ παθοῦσα καὶ μάτην ἐγώ.
145 — ἐπάθομεν πάθος δυσαχές, ὦ πόποι,
ἄφερτον κακόν·—
— ἐξ ἀρκύων πέπτωκεν, οἴχεται δ' ὁ θήρ.
— ὕπνῳ κρατηθεῖσ' ἄγραν ὤλεσα.

ἀντ. α ἰὼ παῖ Διός· ἐπίκλοπος πέλῃ,
150 νέος δὲ γραίας δαίμονας καθιππάσω,
τὸν ἱκέταν σέβων, ἄθεον ἄνδρα καὶ
τοκεῦσιν πικρόν,
τὸν μητραλοίαν δ' ἐξέκλεψας ὢν θεός.
τί τῶνδ' ἐρεῖ τις δικαίως ἔχειν;

στρ. β ἐμοὶ δ' ὄνειδος ἐξ ὀνειράτων μολὸν
156 ἔτυψεν δίκαν διφρηλάτου
μεσολαβεῖ κέντρῳ
ὑπὸ φρένας, ὑπὸ λοβόν·
160 πάρεστι μαστίκτορος δαΐου δαμίου
βαρύ τι περίβαρυ κρύος ἔχειν.

143 ποπάξ (πόπαξ) Ald.: πυπάξ *f*: πύπαξ M.
161 τι Wakefield: τὸ codd.

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[46] It is uncertain how long this process takes. But there is a marked contrast between the disjointed text of the first strophe, where 144 must, and 146 can, be read as interruptions by a second voice, and the following antistrophe (and all subsequent stanzas) which show no sign that they are not being sung throughout by the same voice(s); most likely therefore the chorus is complete by the end of 147.

to come out of the skēnē *until a complete* CHORUS *of twelve has assembled.*[46]]

CHORUS

Iou, iou, popax! We have suffered, my friends—
[*second voice*] Ah, how much have I suffered, and for nothing!
[*main voice*] we have suffered something very painful—oh, popoi!—
an evil too great to bear!—
[*second voice*] He's slipped out of the net—the beast is gone!
[*main voice*] I've been overcome by sleep and lost my prey!

Ió, son of Zeus—you're a thief,
a youth riding roughshod over ancient divinities
by showing respect for the suppliant, a godless man
who injured his parents:
you, a god, smuggled away the man who attacked his mother!
Who will say that any of this is in accordance with justice?[47]

The reproach that came to me in my dreams
struck me, like a charioteer
gripping his goad,
up into my vitals, up into my liver!
I can feel a painful, a very painful, icy sting,
as if from a brutal public scourger.

[47] lit. "What of this will anyone say is . . . ?"

ἀντ. β τοιαῦτα δρῶσιν οἱ νεώτεροι θεοί,
κρατοῦντες τὸ πᾶν δίκας πλέον.
φονολιβῆ θρόνον
165 περὶ πόδα, περὶ κάρα,
πάρεστι γᾶς τ᾽ ὀμφαλὸν προσδρακεῖν αἱμάτων
βλοσυρὸν ἀρόμενον ἄγος ἔχειν.

στρ. γ ἐφεστίῳ δὲ μάντις ὢν μιάσματι
170 μυχὸν ἐχράνατ᾽ αὐτόσσυτος, αὐτόκλητος,
παρὰ νόμον θεῶν βρότεα μὲν τίων,
παλαιγενεῖς δὲ μοίρας φθίσας,

ἀντ. γ κἄμοιγε λυπρός· καὶ τὸν οὐκ ἐκλύσεται·
175 ὑπὸ δὲ γᾶν φυγὼν οὔποτ᾽ ἐλευθεροῦται,
ποτιτρόπαιος ὢν δ᾽ ἕτερον ἐν κάρᾳ
μιάστορ᾽ εἶσιν οὗ πάσεται.

166 *γᾶς τ᾽* Wilamowitz: *γᾶς* codd.
168 *ἀρόμενον* Abresch: *αἰρόμενον* vel sim. codd.
169 *μάντις ὢν* Schütz: *μάντι σῷ* vel sim. codd.
170 *μυχὸν* Robortello, Turnebus: *μυκὸν* M: *σὸν οἶκον f.*
170 *ἐχράνατ᾽* F^{ac}: *ἐχρανά τ᾽* M: *ἐχθράνατ᾽* G F^{pc} E *z*.
174 *κἄμοιγε* (*κἀμοί γε*) Portus: *κἀμοί τε* codd.
175 *δὲ* Heyse: *τε* codd.
175 *φυγὼν* Porson: *φεύγων* codd.
177 *ὢν δ᾽* Porson: *δ᾽ ὢν* codd.
178 *εἶσιν οὗ* Kirchhoff: *ἐκείνου* codd.

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48 Implying that Apollo cannot plead that he did not know what he was doing.

Such are the actions of the younger gods,
who are exercising total power, beyond what justice
allows.
I can see that the prophetic throne
is dripping with gore from head to foot,
and that the navel of earth has acquired for its own
a horrible blood-pollution.

Seer though he is,[48] he has polluted and defiled
the inner sanctum of his own house—himself setting the
pollution in motion, himself inviting it in—
violating the laws of the gods by honouring what is
mortal
while annulling the ancient dispensations of destiny,[49]

and giving offence to *me*! And he will not enable that
man to get free:
even if he flees beneath the earth, he will never be
freed,
but, polluted suppliant that he is, he will be going
where he will get another avenger[50] on his head.

[*APOLLO reappears, bow in hand and ready to shoot.*]

[49] I take μοίρας here in an abstract sense, since Apollo could hardly be accused of "annulling" or "destroying" the immortal Fates (Μοῖραι) themselves; nevertheless the phrase foreshadows later passages in which the Furies claim to have been assigned their privileges by the Fates and accuse their opponents of subverting the Fates' rights and power (334–6, 723–8; cf. also 961–7).

[50] Namely the god Hades (cf. 273), the "other Zeus" who judges the dead in *Supp.* 231.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἔξω, κελεύω, τῶνδε δωμάτων τάχος
χωρεῖτ', ἀπαλλάσσεσθε μαντικῶν μυχῶν,
μὴ καὶ λαβοῦσα πτηνὸν ἀργηστὴν ὄφιν
χρυσηλάτου θώμιγγος ἐξορμώμενον
ἀνῆς ὑπ' ἄλγους μέλαν' ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων ἀφρόν,
ἐμοῦσα θρόμβους οὓς ἀφείλκυσας φόνου.
οὔτοι δόμοις σε τοῖσδε χρίμπτεσθαι πρέπει,
ἀλλ' οὗ καρανιστῆρες ὀφθαλμωρύχοι
δίκαι σφαγαί τε, σπέρματός τ' ἀποφθορᾷ
παίδων κακοῦται χλοῦνις, ἠδ' ἀκρωνιὰ
λευσμός τε, καὶ μύζουσιν οἰκτισμὸν πολὺν
ὑπὸ ῥάχιν παγέντες. ἆρ' ἀκούετε
οἵας ἑορτῆς ἐστ' ἀποπτύστου θεοῖς
στέργηθρ' ἔχουσαι; πᾶς δ' ὑφηγεῖται τρόπος
μορφῆς· λέοντος ἄντρον αἱματορρόφου

185 δόμοις σε Askew: δόμοισι codd. 186 οὗ Turnebus, καρανιστῆρες Stanley (cf. Σ^{M} ἀποκεφαλίζουσαι): οὐκαρανηστῆρες M: οὐκ ἂρ ἀνηστῆρες (sscr. ἀνυστ-) vel sim. *f.*
189 λευσμός Casaubon: λευσμόν codd.
191 ἀποπτύστου Blaydes: ἀπόπτυστοι codd.

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51 A "kenning" for an arrow, which flies like a bird and bites like a snake.

52 Like most of the other atrocities mentioned in the next few lines, blinding and beheading were seen as "barbarian" (especially Persian) practices (cf. e.g. *Pers.* 369–371; Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.9.13), unknown or very rare among Greeks.

53 How deeply most Greeks detested the practice of castration (whether punitive or otherwise) is well illustrated by the story of

APOLLO

Out, I tell you, get out of this house at once! Get away from my inner prophetic sanctum, in case you find yourself on the receiving end of a winged flashing snake[51] speeding from my golden bowstring, and vomit out in agony black foam taken from human bodies, bringing up the clots of blood that you have sucked. It is utterly unfitting that you should have the least contact with this house: you belong where there are head-chopping, eye-gouging judgements and slaughters,[52] where eunuchs are punished by the destruction of their children's seed,[53] where there is mutilation of extremities[54] and stoning,[55] and where men moan with long and piteous cries after being impaled under the spine.[56] Do you hear what kind of festivity, detestable to the gods, you have a fondness for? The whole nature of your appearance indicates as much. Such beings ought properly to dwell in the den of some blood-swilling lion,

Hermotimus and Panionius (Herodotus 8.104–6). The present passage seems to envisage castration being inflicted not only on a criminal but also on his sons (as indeed happened to Panionius); for the punishment of a criminal's children, cf. Herodotus 3.119, 7.39.2–3. The usual construal of this passage, which makes it refer to the castration of young boys (not as a punishment, but in order to sell them as eunuch slaves), is rightly criticized by M. Hendry, *Hermes* 126 (1998) 380–2, though he is not responsible for the interpretation offered here.

54 Hands, feet, nose and/or ears; cf. Herodotus 3.69.5, 3.118.2, 3.154–5, 9.112.1.

55 Unlike the other practices mentioned, stoning was familiar to Greeks (cf. *Ag.* 1615–6), but normally as a method of spontaneous lynching rather than of judicial punishment (as in the case of Lycides at Athens in 480/79, Herodotus 9.5).

56 For this form of execution, commonly used by the Persians, cf. Herodotus 1.128,2, 3.159.1, 4.43.6; [Euripides,] *Rhesus* 512–7.

οἰκεῖν τοιαύτας εἰκός, οὐ χρηστηρίοις
ἐν τοῖσδε πλησίοισι τρίβεσθαι μύσος.
χωρεῖτ᾽ ἄνευ βοτῆρος αἰπολούμεναι·
ποίμνης τοιαύτης δ᾽ οὔτις εὐφιλὴς θεῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, ἀντάκουσον ἐν μέρει.
αὐτὸς σὺ τούτων οὐ μεταίτιος πέλῃ,
ἀλλ᾽ εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἔπραξας ὢν παναίτιος.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

πῶς δή; τοσοῦτο μῆκος ἔκτεινον λόγου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔχρησας ὥστε τὸν ξένον μητροκτονεῖν;

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἔχρησα ποινὰς τοῦ πατρὸς πέμψαι· τί μήν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κἄπειθ᾽ ὑπέστης αἵματος δέκτωρ νέου;

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

καὶ προστραπέσθαι τούσδ᾽ ἐπέστελλον δόμους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ τὰς προπομπὸς δῆτα τάσδε λοιδορεῖς;

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

οὐ γὰρ δόμοισι τοῖσδε πρόσφοροι μολεῖν.

200 ὢν Wakefield: ὡς codd.
204 δέκτωρ M^s, cf. Σ^{ME}: δ᾽ ἔκτωρ codd.
207 πρόσφοροι Bourdelot: πρόσφορον codd.

not to be rubbing off their pollution on everyone near them in this oracular sanctuary. Off you go, and wander like a herd with no herdsman! None of the gods is friendly to a flock like you.

CHORUS

Lord Apollo, hear our reply in turn. You yourself are not *jointly* responsible for this;[57] you did it, from first to last, and you're *entirely* responsible.

APOLLO

How do you mean? Just answer that, no more.[58]

CHORUS

Did you give an oracle for your visitor to kill his mother?

APOLLO

I gave an oracle—of course I did—that he should bring her punishment for what she did to his father.

CHORUS

And then you offered to receive him with fresh blood on his hands?[59]

APOLLO

I actually instructed him to approach this house as a suppliant.

CHORUS

And yet you revile us who escorted him here?

APOLLO

Yes, because you are not fit to come to this house.

[57] i.e. for the defilement of the temple.
[58] lit. "Extend this much length of speech".
[59] lit. "you offered yourself as a receiver of fresh blood".

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ᾽ ἔστιν ἡμῖν τοῦτο προστεταγμένον—

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

τίς ἥδε τιμή; κόμπασον γέρας καλόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοὺς μητραλοίας ἐκ δόμων ἐλαύνομεν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

τί γὰρ γυναικός, ἥτις ἄνδρα νοσφίσῃ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν γένοιθ᾽ ὅμαιμος αὐθέντης φόνος.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἦ κάρτ᾽ ἄτιμα καὶ παρ᾽ οὐδὲν †ἠρκέσω†
Ἥρας τελείας καὶ Διὸς πιστώματα·
Κύπρις δ᾽ ἄτιμος τῷδ᾽ ἀπέρριπται λόγῳ,
ὅθεν βροτοῖσι γίγνεται τὰ φίλτατα.
εὐνὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὶ καὶ γυναικὶ μόρσιμος
ὅρκου ᾽στὶ μείζων, τῇ δίκῃ φρουρουμένη.
εἰ τοῖσιν οὖν κτείνουσιν ἀλλήλους χαλᾷς

213 ἠρκέσω codd.: ἠργάσω (εἰργάσω) Wordsworth: ἠγέσω Wilamowitz. 217 μόρσιμος z: μόρσιμοι M *f*.
219 εἰ Canter: ἢ codd.

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60 Hera in this function bears the same epithet (τελεία) as Zeus "the Fulfiller" (28).

61 Aphrodite.

62 The idea is apparently that a well-matched marriage is as it were predestined by Moῖρα, or (as the modern proverb has it)

CHORUS

But this function has been assigned to us—

APOLLO

What is this honourable role of yours? Go on, boast of your noble privilege!

CHORUS

We drive from their homes those who assault their mothers.

APOLLO

What about a woman who slays her husband?

CHORUS

That would not be a kindred murder of a person of the same blood.

APOLLO

Truly you have held in utter contempt the pledges of Hera, goddess of marriage,[60] and of Zeus, and <treated> them as being of no account; and Cypris[61] too is cast aside in dishonour by this argument, she from whom come the closest, dearest ties that mortals have. The bed of a man and a woman, when hallowed by destiny,[62] is something mightier than an oath,[63] and Justice stands sentinel over it. If, then, you go easy on those who kill each other by not punishing

"made in heaven"; cf. *Odyssey* 16.392 *γήμαιθ' ὅς κε πλεῖστα πόροι καὶ μόρσιμος ἔλθοι.*

63 This implies that an oath to violate the obligations of marriage (such as the mutual oaths of Clytaemestra and Aegisthus, cf. *Cho.* 977–9) has, or should have, no binding force; Apollo will later say that the same is true of any oath which, if kept, would go against the will of Zeus (621).

τὸ μὴ τίνεσθαι μηδ' ἐποπτεύειν κότῳ,
οὔ φημ' Ὀρέστην σ' ἐνδίκως ἀνδρηλατεῖν.
τὰ μὲν γὰρ οἶδα κάρτα σ' ἐνθυμουμένην,
τὰ δ' ἐμφανῶς πράσσουσαν ἡσυχαίτερα.
δίκας δὲ Παλλὰς τῶνδ' ἐποπτεύσει θεά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὸν ἄνδρ' ἐκεῖνον οὔ τι μὴ λίπω ποτέ.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

σὺ δ' οὖν δίωκε καὶ πόνον πλείω τίθου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τιμὰς σὺ μὴ σύντεμνε τὰς ἐμὰς λόγῳ.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

οὐδ' ἂν δεχοίμην ὥστ' ἔχειν τιμὰς σέθεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μέγας γὰρ ἔμπας πὰρ Διὸς θρόνοις λέγῃ.
ἐγὼ δ', ἄγει γὰρ αἷμα μητρῷον, δίκας
μέτειμι τόνδε φῶτα κἀκκυνηγέσω.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἐγὼ δ' ἀρήξω τὸν ἱκέτην τε ῥύσομαι·
δεινὴ γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖσι κἀν θεοῖς πέλει
τοῦ προστροπαίου μῆνις, εἰ προδῷ σφ' ἑκών.

220 *τὸ μὴ τίνεσθαι* Meineke: *γενέσθαι* codd.
221 σ' Robortello, Turnebus: *γ'* M: om. *f*.
223 *ἡσυχαίτερα* Linwood: *ἡσυχαιτέραν* codd.
224 δὲ Παλλὰς Sophianus: δ' *ἐπάλλας* M: δ' *ἐπ' ἄλλας f*.
225 *λίπω* Askew: *λείπω* codd.
226 *πλείω* (*πλέω*) Auratus: *πλέον* codd.

them and not casting a wrathful eye on them, I say you have no right to harry Orestes from his home. One kind of action[64] I perceive that you take very much to heart, while about the other kind[65] you are blatantly acting more gently. The goddess Pallas will oversee a trial of this issue.

CHORUS

I will never, never let that man go.

APOLLO

All right then, chase him, and get yourself more toil and trouble!

CHORUS

Don't you try and cut down my privileges by your talk!

APOLLO

I wouldn't even have your privileges if you gave me them!

CHORUS

Because you're accounted great anyway, next to the throne of Zeus. But a mother's blood is drawing me on: I shall pursue this man to punish him—I shall hunt him down!

[*The* CHORUS *depart, by the same way that* ORESTES *had taken.*]

APOLLO

And I shall support and protect my suppliant; for the wrath of one who begs for succour is terrible, both among mortals and among gods, if they willingly betray him.

64 viz. the murder of a mother.

65 viz. gross violations of the marriage bond.

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231 *κἀκκυνηγέσω* Powell: *κἀκκυνηγέτης* M *f*: *γ' ὡς κμνηγέτης z*.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄνασσ' Ἀθάνα, Λοξίου κελεύμασιν
ἥκω· δέχου δὲ πρευμενῶς ἀλήτορα,
οὐ προστρόπαιον οὐδ' ἀφοίβαντον χέρα,
ἀλλ' ἀμβλὺν ἤδη προστετριμμένον τε πρὸς
ἄλλοισιν οἴκοις καὶ πορεύμασιν βροτῶν.
ὅμοια χέρσον καὶ θάλασσαν ἐκπερῶν,
σῴζων ἐφετμὰς Λοξίου χρηστηρίους,
πάρειμι δῶμα καὶ βρέτας τὸ σόν, θεά.
αὐτοῦ φυλάσσων ἀναμενῶ τέλος δίκης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἶἑν· τόδ' ἐστὶ τἀνδρὸς ἐκφανὲς τέκμαρ·
ἕπου δὲ μηνυτῆρος ἀφθέγκτου φραδαῖς·
τετραυματισμένον γὰρ ὡς κύων νεβρὸν
πρὸς αἷμα καὶ σταλαγμὸν ἐκμαστεύομεν.
πολλοῖς δὲ μόχθοις ἀνδροκμῆσι φυσιᾷ
σπλάγχνον· χθονὸς γὰρ πᾶς πεποίμανται τόπος,
ὑπέρ τε πόντον ἀπτέροις ποτήμασιν
ἦλθον διώκουσ' οὐδὲν ὑστέρα νεώς.

236 ἀλήτορα Taplin: ἀλάστορα codd.
242 πάρειμι Podlecki: πρόσειμι codd.
246 νεβρὸν Victorius: νεκρὸν codd.
250 ποτήμασιν Portus: πωτήμασιν codd.

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66 This phrase should be taken as referring both to Orestes' blood-pollution and to Orestes himself.

67 lit. "by other homes and journeyings of mortals". The very fact that Orestes has been able to travel with other men, and to

[*APOLLO withdraws into the* skēnē.]

[*The scene now changes to the temple of Athena Polias on the Acropolis at Athens, with the ancient olive-wood image of Athena in a central position.* ORESTES *enters; he approaches and addresses the image.*]

ORESTES

Lady Athena, I have come here on the instructions of Loxias. Be kind and receive this wanderer—not a suppliant for purification nor one with unclean hands, but weakened now and worn away[66] in the homes of other men and by journeying in their company.[67] Crossing over sea and land alike, obeying the oracular behests of Loxias, I have arrived at your house, goddess, and before your image. Here I shall keep vigil and await a final judgement.

[*He sits down, clasping the image in his arms. The* CHORUS *enter, by the same way by which he had come. They move this way and that like hounds casting about in search of a scent, until their leader gives a cry of satisfaction.*]

CHORUS

Aha! This is the clear track of the man! Follow the guidance of the voiceless informant! Like a hound on the trail of a wounded fawn, we are tracking him down by the drip of blood. My lungs are puffing with my long toil, which would have exhausted a mortal: our flock has ranged over every place on earth, and I have passed over the sea, in wingless flight, no less swiftly than a ship. And now that

stay under their roofs, without harm to them, is evidence that he is no longer under pollution (cf. 284–5).

καὶ νῦν ὅδ' ἐνθάδ' ἐστί που καταπτακών·
ὀσμὴ βροτείων αἱμάτων με προσγελᾷ.

ὅρα ὅρα μάλ' αὖ· λεῦσσε τόπον πάντᾳ,
μὴ λάθῃ φύγδα βὰς ματροφόνος ἀτίτας.
ὅδ' αὐτός· ἀλκὰν ἔχων
περὶ βρέτει πλεχθεὶς θεᾶς ἀμβρότου
ὑπόδικος θέλει γενέσθαι χερῶν.
τὸ δ' οὐ πάρεστιν. αἷμα μητρῷον χαμαὶ
δυσάγκομιστον, παπαῖ,
τὸ διερὸν πέδῳ χύμενον οἴχεται.
ἀλλ' ἀντιδοῦναι δεῖ σ' ἀπὸ ζῶντος ῥοφεῖν
ἐρυθρὸν ἐκ μελέων πελανόν, ἀπὸ δὲ σοῦ
βοσκὰν φεροίμαν πώματος δυσπότου·
καὶ ζῶντά σ' ἰσχνάνασ' ἀπάξομαι κάτω,
ἀντίποιν' ὡς τίνῃς ματροφόνος δύας.

255 τόπον West: τον (in an erasure of about 5 letter-spaces) M^{pc}: τὸν *f*.
257 ματροφόνος Hermann: ὁ ματροφόνος codd.
258 αὐτός Stanley (αὐτὸς οὐκ Auratus): αὖτε γοῦν vel sim. codd. 260 χερῶν M G F E^{pc} *z*: χρεῶν E^{ac} iΣ^{M} (ἀνθ' ὧν ἡμῖν χρεωστεῖ). 263 χύμενον Porson: κεχυμένον codd.
267 ἰσχνάνασ' Turnebus: ἰχνάνασ' M: ἰσχάνασ' *f*.
268 ἀντίποιν' ὡς Schütz: ἀντιποίνους codd.
268 ματρο- Casaubon, -φόνος Bothe: μητροφόνας codd.

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68 lit. "smiling at".

69 A paraphrase in the scholia shows that there was an ancient variant χρεῶν "for his debt, for what he owes us".

man is here somewhere, cowering down: the scent of human blood is greeting[68] me!

Look, look again! Cast your eyes all round the place,
for fear this unpunished matricide gets away in flight
unnoticed.

[*Catching sight of* ORESTES]

Here's the man himself! He's taken sanctuary,
wrapping himself around the image of the immortal
goddess
and wanting to stand trial for his act of violence.[69]
But that is not possible. A mother's blood on the ground
is hard to bring back up—papai!—
wet blood that is shed on to the earth and disappears.
No, you must give in return a thick red liquid from your
limbs
for us to slurp[70] from your living body: from you
may I draw the nourishment of a draught horrid to
drink!
And having drained you dry while you live, I shall haul
you off below,
so that you may pay in suffering the penalty of your
matricide;

[70] ῥοφεῖν is the everyday Attic verb for the drinking of thick liquids such as soup and broth; in tragedy it is used only of the ingestion of human blood or tissue by the Furies or beings compared to or closely associated with them (193; Sophocles, *Trachinian Maidens* 1055, cf. 1051; Sophocles fr. 743).

ὄψῃ δὲ κεἴ τις ἄλλος ἤλιτεν βροτῶν
ἢ θεὸν ἢ ξένον τιν᾽ ἀσεβῶν
ἢ τοκέας φίλους,
ἔχονθ᾽ ἕκαστον τῆς δίκης ἐπάξια.
μέγας γὰρ Ἅιδης ἐστὶν εὔθυνος βροτῶν
ἔνερθε χθονός,
δελτογράφῳ δὲ πάντ᾽ ἐπωπᾷ φρενί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐγὼ διδαχθεὶς ἐν κακοῖς ἐπίσταμαι
πολλῶν τε καιροὺς καὶ λέγειν ὅπου δίκη
σιγᾶν θ᾽ ὁμοίως· ἐν δὲ τῷδε πράγματι
φωνεῖν ἐτάχθην πρὸς σοφοῦ διδασκάλου.
βρίζει γὰρ αἷμα καὶ μαραίνεται χερός,
μητροκτόνον μίασμα δ᾽ ἔκπλυτον πέλει·
ποταίνιον γὰρ ὃν πρὸς ἑστίᾳ θεοῦ
Φοίβου καθαρμοῖς ἠλάθη χοιροκτόνοις.
πολὺς δέ μοι γένοιτ᾽ ἂν ἐξ ἀρχῆς λόγος,
ὅσοις προσῆλθον ἀβλαβεῖ ξυνουσίᾳ.
καὶ νῦν ἀφ᾽ ἁγνοῦ στόματος εὐφήμως καλῶ
χώρας ἄνασσαν τῆσδ᾽ Ἀθηναίαν ἐμοὶ
μολεῖν ἀρωγόν· κτήσεται δ᾽ ἄνευ δορὸς

269 δὲ κεἴ τις Porson, ἄλλος *m*: δ᾽ ἐκεῖ τις ἄλλον M *f*.

278 πολλῶν τε καιρούς Blass, cf. Σ^{M} ἑκατέρου καιρὸν γιγνώσκων: πολλοὺς καθαρμοὺς codd.

{286} χρόνος καθαιρεῖ (καθαίρει Portus) πάντα γηράσκων (διδάσκων *f*, γε διδάσκων *z*) ὁμοῦ codd.: del. Musgrave.

and you will see there such other mortals as have
grievously sinned,
acting impiously towards a god, or a host or guest,
or their dear parents,
each receiving what is appropriate to satisfy justice.
For Hades is the great assessor of mortals
beneath the earth;
he watches all their acts, and the tablets of his mind
record them.

ORESTES

Taught by misfortunes, I know the right moment to do many things, and in particular the situations in which it is proper to speak and likewise those where one should keep silent; and in this present predicament I have been instructed, by a wise teacher, to speak. For the blood is growing drowsy and fading from my hand, and the pollution of matricide has been washed out: at the hearth of the god Phoebus, when it was still fresh, it was expelled by means of the purification-sacrifice of a young pig.[71] And it would be a long tale for me to tell from the beginning how many people I have come near in meetings that have done no harm.[72] Now, therefore, it is with pure lips that I call reverently on Athena, sovereign of this land, to come to my aid; and she will thereby, without any use of force,[73] acquire

71 The priest held a young pig over the head of the person to be purified, and cut its throat so that the blood dripped on the man's head and hands. See R. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983) 370–4.

72 Cf. Antiphon 5.83: "Whoever I sailed with, enjoyed an excellent voyage; whenever I was present at a sacrifice, the ritual always passed off perfectly."

73 lit. "without the spear".

αὐτόν τε καὶ γῆν καὶ τὸν Ἀργεῖον λεὼν
πιστὸν δικαίως εἰς τὸ πᾶν τε σύμμαχον.
ἀλλ' εἴτε χώρας ἐν τόποις Λιβυστικῆς,
Τρίτωνος ἀμφὶ χεῦμα γενεθλίου πόρου,
τίθησιν ὀρθὸν ἢ κατηρεφῆ πόδα
φίλοις ἀρήγουσ', εἴτε Φλεγραίαν πλάκα
θρασὺς ταγοῦχος ὡς ἀνὴρ ἐπισκοπεῖ,
ἔλθοι—κλύει δὲ καὶ πρόσωθεν ὢν θεός—
ὅπως γένοιτο τῶνδέ μοι λυτήριος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὗτοι σ' Ἀπόλλων οὐδ' Ἀθηναίας σθένος
ῥύσαιτ' ἂν ὥστε μὴ οὐ παρημελημένον
ἔρρειν, τὸ χαίρειν μὴ μαθόνθ' ὅπου φρενῶν,
ἀναίματον βόσκημα δαιμόνων, σκιάν.
οὐδ' ἀντιφωνεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀποπτύεις λόγους,
ἐμοὶ τραφείς τε καὶ καθιερωμένος;

292 Λιβυστικῆς Auratus or Portus: Λιβυστικοῖς codd. *t.*
298 τῶνδέ (τῶνδε) μοι *z*: τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ M *f.*
302 σκιάν Heath: σκιά codd.

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74 The first of three allusions (cf. 667–673, 772–4) to the Athenian-Argive alliance of 461 BC (see Introduction).

75 Λιβύη was, and remained, the Greek name for the African continent (cf. Herodotus 4.41–43), so that the proverb ἀεὶ Λιβύη φέρει τι καινόν (Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* 606b19–20) was rendered into Latin by Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* 8.42) as *semper aliquid novi Africam adferre.*

76 Athena's Homeric epithet Τριτογένεια was explained by a story that she was born on the banks of a river in "Libya" called

myself, my land, and my Argive people as allies in righteous fidelity for ever.[74] But whether she is in a region of the land of Africa,[75] close by the stream of her natal river Triton,[76] planting a straight or a covered leg[77] to aid her friends,[78] or whether she is surveying the plain of Phlegra[79] like a bold man in command of an army, may she come here—a god can hear even from far away—so that she may be my liberator from these troubles.[80]

CHORUS

Neither Apollo, nor the power of Athena, can save you from having to wander as a neglected outcast, never learning where in the mind happiness lies,[81] preyed on by us spirits until he is bloodless, a mere shadow. [*The speaker pauses;* ORESTES *does not reply*] Do you not even answer? Do you treat my words with contempt, when you have been reared for me and consecrated to me? You will make

the Triton ([Hesiod] fr. 343.9–12; Herodotus 4.178–180), which flowed into a lake of the same name.

77 i.e. either marching quickly forward (with "straight leg") or else advancing cautiously under attack, using her shield to cover body and legs as far as possible; see E. K. Borthwick, *Hermes* 97 (1969) 385–390.

78 Since there is no mythical tradition of Athena *fighting a battle* on African soil, an audience that has just been reminded of the recent Argive alliance will certainly think of the Athenian-led force currently campaigning in Egypt (see Introduction).

79 On the peninsula of Pallene in Chalcidice; it was the scene of the Battle of the Gods and Giants, in which Athena took a prominent part.

80 Taking τῶνδε as neuter; but it could also be feminine ("from these persecutors").

81 i.e. what it means to be happy.

καὶ ζῶν με δαίσεις οὐδὲ πρὸς βωμῷ σφαγείς·
ὕμνον δ' ἀκούσῃ τόνδε δέσμιον σέθεν.

ἄγε δὴ καὶ χορὸν ἄψωμεν, ἐπεὶ
μοῦσαν στυγερὰν
ἀποφαίνεσθαι δεδόκηκεν
λέξαι τε λάχη τὰ κατ' ἀνθρώπους
ὡς ἐπινωμᾷ στάσις ἁμή.
εὐθυδίκαιοι δ' οἰόμεθ' εἶναι·
τὸν μὲν καθαρὰς χεῖρας προνέμοντ'
οὔτις ἐφέρπει μῆνις ἀφ' ἡμῶν,
ἀσινὴς δ' αἰῶνα διοιχνεῖ·
ὅστις δ' ἀλιτὼν ὥσπερ ὅδ' ἀνὴρ
χεῖρας φονίας ἐπικρύπτει,
μάρτυρες ὀρθαὶ τοῖσι θανοῦσιν
παραγιγνόμεναι πράκτορες αἵματος
αὐτῷ τελέως ἐφάνημεν.

στρ. α μᾶτερ ἆ μ' ἔτικτες, ὦ
μᾶτερ Νύξ, ἀλα-
οῖσι καὶ δεδορκόσιν

311 ἁμή Dindorf (ἁμά Auratus, Canter): ἅμα codd.
312 εὐθυδίκαιοι Hermann, δ' Portus, οἰόμεθ' εἶναι H. L. Ahrens: εὐθυδίκαι θ' οἰδ' οἰμεθ' εἶναι M: εὐθυδίκαι τ' οἶδ' οἶμαι θεῖναι *f*. 313 τὸν . . . προνέμοντ' Musgrave: τοὺς . . . προνέμοντας codd. 314 ἐφέρπει . . . ἀφ' ἡμῶν Porson: ἀφ' ἡμῶν . . . ἐφέρπει codd.
316 ἀλιτὼν Auratus: ἀλιτρῶν codd.

a feast for me while you still live, without being slain at any altar. You will now hear this song sung to bind you.

Come, let us now join in dance,
since we have resolved to display
our horrifying artistry
and to tell how our company
apportions the fortunes of men.
We believe we practise straight justice:
against him who can display clean hands
there comes no wrath from us,
and he goes through life unharmed;
but as for him who has sinned grievously, like this man,
and conceals his gory hands,
we present ourselves as upright witnesses
in support of the dead, and manifest ourselves with final authority
as avengers of blood upon the killer.

[*The* CHORUS *surround* ORESTES]

Mother, O mother Night,[82]
who bore me to be
a punishment for the blind

[82] The Furies are apparently here being identified with the Κῆρες of Hesiod, *Theogony* 217 + 220–2, "merciless avengers . . . who pursue the transgressions of men and gods", who, along with many other (mostly sinister) deities and groups of deities, were the parthenogenetically born children of Night. In the spurious ending of *Seven* (1055) the chorus address the Κῆρες Ἐρινύες who have destroyed the family of Oedipus.

ποινάν, κλῦθ'· ὁ Λατοῦς γὰρ ἶ-
νίς μ' ἄτιμον τίθησιν
τόνδ' ἀφαιρούμενος
πτῶκα, ματρῷον ἄγ-
νισμα κύριον φόνου.

ἐπῳ. α ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ
τόδε μέλος, παρακοπά,
παραφορά, φρενοδαλὴς
ὕμνος ἐξ Ἐρινύων,
δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρ-
μιγκτος, αὐονὰ βροτοῖς.

ἀντ. α τοῦτο γὰρ λάχος διαν-
ταία Μοῖρ' ἐπέ-
κλωσεν ἐμπέδως ἔχειν,
θνατῶν τοῖσιν αὐτουργίαι
ξυμπέσωσιν μάταιοι,
τοῖς ὁμαρτεῖν ὄφρ' ἂν

326 *πτῶκα* Sophianus: *πτάκα* M: *πτᾶκα* M^{s} *f.*
336 *θνατῶν* Canter: *θανάτων* codd.
336–7 *αὐτουργίαι ξυμπέσωσιν* Turnebus: *αὐτουργίαις ξύμ-πας ωσιν* vel sim. codd.

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83 i.e. for the dead and the living. 84 Apollo.
85 Orestes. 86 i.e. "not joyful" (cf. *Ag.* 990–1).
87 Elsewhere in Aeschylus (*Cho.* 184, 640; *Seven* 895) διανταῖος always describes an (actual or metaphorical) sword-thrust that goes clean through the body.

and for those who see,[83]
hear me! The child of Leto[84]
is depriving me of my rights
by snatching away from me
this hare,[85] a proper sacrifice
to cleanse a mother's murder.

And over the sacrificial victim
this is my song: insanity,
derangement, the mind-destroying
chant of the Furies
that binds the mind, sung
to no lyre,[86] a song to shrivel men up!

For this was the lot
that death-dealing[87] Destiny
spun for us in perpetuity:
for those mortals to whom there happen
wanton murders of kinsfolk,[88]
to dog their footsteps till

[88] This refers of course to the perpetrators of such murders, not the victims; the expression seems odd, but is highly appropriate to Orestes, who through no fault of his own found himself in a situation where he had no alternative but to kill his mother. Since *αὐτουργίαι* can be understood to mean "murder of kinsfolk" only by the analogy of words like *αὐτοφονίαι* (its gloss in M) and *αὐθέντης*, the phrase *αὐτουργίαι . . . μάταιοι* probably carries simultaneously a second meaning, "acts of wanton wickedness" or the like, foreshadowing the broader jurisdiction which will be claimed by or for the Furies in later passages (421, 517ff, 930–1, 950ff).

γᾶν ὑπέλθῃ· θανὼν δ'
οὐκ ἄγαν ἐλεύθερος.

φυμν. α ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ
τόδε μέλος, παρακοπά,
παραφορά, φρενοδαλὴς
ὕμνος ἐξ Ἐρινύων,
δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρ-
μιγκτος, αὐονὰ βροτοῖς.

στρ. β γιγνομέναισι λάχη τάδ' ἐφ' ἁμὶν ἐκράνθη,
ἀθανάτων δ' ἀπέχειν χέρας, οὐδέ τίς ἐστι
συνδαίτωρ μετάκοινος·
παλλεύκων δὲ πέπλων ἄκληρος ἄμοιρος ἐτύχθην
<– ∪ – × – ∪ –>.

ωμν. β δωμάτων γὰρ εἱλόμαν
ἀνατροπάς· ὅταν Ἄρης
τιθασὸς ὢν φίλον ἕλῃ,
ἐπὶ τόν, ὤ, διόμεναι

343 παραφορά M^{pc} in 330: παράφρονα codd. (and M^{ac} *f* in 330). 351 συνδαίτωρ Turnebus: συνδάτωρ codd.
353 ἄκληρος ἄμοιρος Drake: ἄμοιρος ἄκληρος codd.
after 353 lacuna posited by Wilamowitz: ‹εὐφρόνων θ' ὁμιλιᾶν› e.g. Groeneboom.
354 δωμάτων *z*: δομάτων M *f*.
356 τιθασὸς (τίθασος) *m*, cf. Σ^{M} οἰκεῖος: πίθασ(σ)ος M *f*.
356 φίλον Turnebus: φίλος codd.

they go[89] beneath the earth—and when he has died
he is not all that free.

And over the sacrificial victim
this is my song: insanity,
derangement, the mind-destroying
chant of the Furies
that binds the mind, sung
to no lyre, a song to shrivel men up!

From our birth we were ordained to have this lot,
and to keep our hands off the immortals[90]—there is not
even
anyone who feasts both with them and with us;
and I was made to have no part or share in pure white
garments[91]
< >.

For I have chosen for my own the overturning
of houses: when Violence
turns domestic and destroys a kinsman,
we chase him[92]—oh!—

89 lit. "he goes".

90 Here denoting specifically the Olympian gods; "to keep our hands off", which might at first be taken to mean "not to punish", proves in fact, as the sentence proceeds, to mean "to avoid all (direct or indirect) contact with".

91 i.e. in joyful festivities (which may have been more explicitly spoken of in the words which, as comparison with the antistrophe shows, have been lost after this line).

92 i.e. the killer (the embodiment, for the time being, of Violence).

κρατερὸν ὄνθ' ὅμως ἀμαυ-
ροῦμεν †ὑφ' αἵματος νέου†.

ἀντ. β σπευδομένα δ' ἀφελεῖν τινα τάσδε μερίμνας
θεῶν ἀτέλειαν ἐμαῖς μελέταις ἐπικραίνω
μηδ' εἰς ἄγκρισιν ἐλθεῖν.
Ζεὺς δ' αἱμοσταγὲς ἀξιόμισον ἔθνος τόδε λέσχας
ἃς ἀπηξιώσατο.

στρ. γ δόξαι δ' ἀνδρῶν καὶ μάλ' ὑπ' αἰθέρι σεμναὶ
τακόμεναι κατὰ γᾶς μινύθουσιν ἄτιμοι
ἀμετέραις ἐφόδοις μελανείμοσιν
ὀρχησμοῖς τ' ἐπιφθόνοις ποδός·

ἀντ. γ μάλα γὰρ οὖν ἁλομένα
ἀνέκαθεν βαρυπετῆ

358–9 ὅμως Schütz, ἀμαυροῦμεν Burges: ὁμοίως μαυροῦμεν codd. 359 ὑφ' (M: ἐφ' *f*) αἵματος νέου codd.: ὑφ' del. Weil: αἵματος κενόν Dawe.
360 σπευδομένα M^{ac}: σπευδόμεναι M^{pc} *f*.
361 θεῶν Hermann: θεῶν δ' codd.
362 ἐμαῖς μελέταις H. Voss: ἐμαῖσι λιταῖς codd.
362 ἐπικραίνω Hartung: ἐπικραίνειν codd.
365 Ζεὺς M^{s}, δ' Linwood: Ζεῦ γὰρ M: Ζεῦ *f*.
365 αἱμοσταγὲς Bothe: αἱματοσταγὲς codd.
368 δ' Paley: τ' codd.
369 γᾶς Hermann: γᾶν codd.
371 ἐπιφθόνοις Heath: ἐπιφόνοις codd.
373 ἀνέκαθεν Pearson, βαρυπετῆ Blaydes: ἄγκαθεν βαρυπεσῆ codd.

and powerful though he may be, still we enfeeble him
‹till he is drained of› blood.[93]

Being eager to relieve everyone of these concerns,
I bring it about by my efforts that the gods have
immunity from them
so that they do not even have to go to an inquiry;[94]
and Zeus has held our blood-dripping, odious tribe
unworthy of his company.

Men's conceit of themselves, however proud while under
the bright sky,
dwindles and melts away into worthlessness when
beneath the earth,
thanks to our black-garbed assaults
and the angry dancing of our feet;[95]

for I give a great leap
and then bring down my foot[96]

[93] The transmitted text is unintelligible; I translate Dawe's conjecture, which gives good sense but does not adequately account for the corruption. [94] The Furies are apparently claiming that they do the Olympians a favour by relieving them of the unpleasant duty of punishing, or even inquiring into, murders within the family. The text, however, is very uncertain here.

[95] Here, and in the lines that follow, the words seem to carry some indication of the choreography: one may picture the circle of dancers closing in on their victim while flapping their dark garments with sinister effect, then (372–4) leaping high and coming down hard as if to stamp the life out of him, then perhaps (375–6) extending a leg as if to trip up a runner.

[96] lit. "the extremity of (i.e. constituted by) my foot".

καταφέρω ποδὸς ἀκμάν,
σφαλερὰ καὶ τανυδρόμοις
κῶλα, δύσφορον ἄταν.

ἀντ. γ πίπτων δ' οὐκ οἶδεν τόδ' ὑπ' ἄφρονι λύμᾳ·
τοῖον ἐπὶ κνέφας ἀνδρὶ μύσος πεπόταται,
καὶ δνοφεράν τιν' ἀχλὺν κατὰ δώματος
αὐδᾶται πολύστονος φάτις.

στρ. δ μένει γάρ· εὐμήχανοί
τε καὶ τέλειοι, κακῶν
τε μνάμονες, σεμναὶ
καὶ δυσπαρήγοροι βροτοῖς,
ἀτίετα διέπομεν λάχη
θεῶν διχοστατοῦντ' ἀναλίῳ λάπᾳ,
δυσοδοπαίπαλα δερκομένοισι
καὶ δυσομμάτοις ὁμῶς.

ἀντ. δ τίς οὖν τάδ' οὐχ ἅζεταί
τε καὶ δέδοικεν βροτῶν,
ἐμοῦ κλύων θεσμὸν
τὸν μοιρόκραντον ἐκ θεῶν

375 καὶ Σ^{M}: om. codd. 378 τοῖον Heath: τοῖον γὰρ codd. 382 τε anon.: δὲ codd.
385 ἀτίετα Headlam (ἄτιμ' ἀτίετα Canter): ἄτιμ' ἀτίεται (-τον *f*) codd. 385 διέπομεν Heath: διόμεναι codd.
386 λάπᾳ Wieseler: λαμπαι M: λαμπαὶ *f*.
389 οὐχ ἅζεται Turnebus: οὐ χάζεται codd.

from above with a heavy crash,
a leg to trip even a runner
at full stretch and cause unendurable ruin.

But when he falls, he does not know this,[97] because the
injury has taken away his wits:
such is the dark cloud of pollution that hovers over the
man,
and a voice full of grieving
speaks of a murky mist over his house.

It stands fast: resourceful,
effective, remembering
wrongs, awesome,
unappeasable by mortals,
we carry out our despised function,
far away from the gods, in the sunless slime,
making a rough and rocky path for the seeing
and the eyeless[98] alike.

What mortal, then, is not in awe
and fear of this,
when he hears from me of this charter,
ordained by Destiny and accepted[99]

97 viz. that his fall was caused by the Furies.

98 i.e. "the living and the dead", as at 322.

99 lit. "given"; but this must mean "conceded, allowed", since the Furies are far older than the Olympians and have had their powers and privileges ever since they were born (347–8).

δοθέντα τέλεον; ἔπι δέ μοι
γέρας παλαιόν, οὐδ' ἀτιμίας κυρῶ,
καίπερ ὑπὸ χθόνα τάξιν ἔχουσα
καὶ δυσάλιον κνέφας.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

πρόσωθεν ἐξήκουσα κληδόνος βοὴν
ἀπὸ Σκαμάνδρου, γῆν καταφθατουμένη,
ἣν δῆτ' Ἀχαιῶν ἄκτορές τε καὶ πρόμοι,
τῶν αἰχμαλώτων χρημάτων λάχος μέγα,
ἔνειμαν αὐτόπρεμνον εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἐμοί,
ἐξαίρετον δώρημα Θησέως τόκοις·
ἔνθεν διώκουσ' ἦλθον ἄτρυτον πόδα,
πτερῶν ἄτερ ῥοιβδοῦσα κόλπον αἰγίδος.
καινὴν δ' ὁρῶσα τήνδ' ὁμιλίαν χθονὸς

398 *γῆν . . . -μένη* Stanley, cf. ΣM *καταφθάνουσα: τὴν . . . -μένην* codd.

{405} *πώλοις ἀκμαίοις τόνδ' ἐπιζεύξασ' ὄχον* codd.: del. Wilamowitz.

406 *καινὴν* Canter: *καὶ νῦν* codd.

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100 It is not clear whether Athena enters on foot or by means of the *mēchanē*; in either case she will have appeared from the opposite direction to that from which Orestes and the Furies arrived.

101 This may refer to the Athenians in general (cf. 13, 1011) and/or to the actual sons of Theseus (Acamas and Demophon), who in the cyclic epics and in Athenian tradition (though not in the *Iliad*) played a prominent part in the Trojan War (cf. *Little Iliad* fr. 17 West; *Sack of Troy* fr. 6 West; Sophocles, *Philoctetes* 562; Euripides, *Hecuba* 123–9, *Iphigeneia at Aulis* 247–252). The land

by the gods? I have
an ancient privilege, nor am I without honour,
even though I have my assigned station beneath the
earth
in the sunless darkness.

[*Enter* ATHENA, *clad in armour and wearing her aegis.*][100]

ATHENA

From far away I heard a cry summoning me, from the Scamander, where I was staking my claim to the land which the leaders and chiefs of the Achaeans had apportioned to me entirely, absolutely and for ever, a large share of the captured property, as a special gift set aside for the children of Theseus.[101] From there I have come on rapid and unwearied foot, not flying on wings but flapping the folds of my aegis.[102] Now, seeing these new visitors to my land,

referred to is usually taken to be Sigeum, a fortress near the site of Troy, between the Hellespont and the lowest reaches of the Scamander, which had once been disputed between Athens and Mytilene (Herodotus 5.94–95); in the early fifth century it was a Persian possession, but Athenian forces had seen action there in 465/4 (*The Athenian Agora* xvii 1.32, 119) and by 451/0 Sigeum was a member of the Athenian alliance (*IG* i^3 17).

[102] Athena's aegis is represented in art as a garment (now short, now long, and often scaly) fringed with tassels or with snakes, either worn over the shoulders or hung over the left arm. In the manuscripts there follows a line ("yoking this chariot to colts in their prime") which implies, contrary to 403, that Athena entered in a horse-drawn vehicle; this was doubtless written to replace 404 for a production in which her entrance was staged in that way.

ταρβῶ μὲν οὐδέν, θαῦμα δ' ὅμμασιν πάρα.
τίνες ποτ' ἐστέ; πᾶσι δ' εἰς κοινὸν λέγω,
βρέτας τε τοὐμὸν τῷδ' ἐφημένῳ ξένῳ
ὑμῖν θ'· ὅμοιαι δ' οὐδενὶ σπαρτῶν γένει,
οὔτ' ἐν θεαῖσι πρὸς θεῶν ὁρωμέναις
οὔτ' οὖν βροτείοις ἐμφερεῖς μορφώμασιν.
λέγειν δ' ἄμομφον ὄντα τὸν πέλας κακῶς
πρόσω δικαίων ἠδ' ἀποστατεῖ θέμις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πεύσῃ τὰ πάντα συντόμως, Διὸς κόρη.
ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν Νυκτὸς αἰανῆ τέκνα,
Ἀραὶ δ' ἐν οἴκοις γῆς ὑπαὶ κεκλήμεθα.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

γένος μὲν οἶδα κληδόνας τ' ἐπωνύμους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τιμάς γε μὲν δὴ τὰς ἐμὰς πεύσῃ τάχα.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

μάθοιμ' ἄν, εἰ λέγοι τις ἐμφανῆ λόγον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βροτοκτονοῦντας ἐκ δόμων ἐλαύνομεν.

410 ὑμῖν θ' Portus, ὁμοῖαι (sic) δ' Page: ὑμᾶς δ' ὁμοίας M: ὑμᾶς δ' ὁμοίως *f*.
413 ἄμομφον Robortello, cf. Σ^{M} ἄμορφος οὖσα (*sic*) . . . ἀντιψέξαι: ἄμορφον codd.
413 τὸν Auratus: τοὺς M: τοῦ *f*.
414 ἠδ' F: ἠδ' M: ᾗδ' G E *z*.
416 αἰανῆ M ¦Σ^{M}: αἰανῆς *f*.

while I am not in the least afraid, my eyes are full of amazement. Who may you be? I speak to all alike, both to this stranger who is sitting close to my image and to you [*meaning the* CHORUS]. You resemble no race of begotten beings, neither among the goddesses who are beheld by gods, nor is your appearance similar to that of mortals—[*checking herself*] but to speak injuriously of another, when one has no cause to blame him, is a long way from what is right, and propriety keeps far from it.

CHORUS

We will tell you everything in brief, daughter of Zeus. We are the everlasting children of Night, and in our home below the earth we are called the Curses.[103]

ATHENA

I now know your parentage, and the name by which you are called . . . .

CHORUS

And you will soon learn my privileges also.

ATHENA

I would, if someone gave me a clear account of them.

CHORUS

We drive from their homes those who kill human beings.

103 This and *Seven* 70 (Ἀρά τ' Ἐρινὺς πατρός) are the only passages in which the Furies (Erinyes) are explicitly given the name "Curses" (Ἀραί). In Homer, however, the Erinyes appear most frequently as the divine embodiments of a curse, especially the curse of a wronged parent (*Iliad* 9.454, 571; 21.412; *Odyssey* 2.135, 11.280).

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

καὶ τῷ κτανόντι ποῦ τὸ τέρμα τῆς φυγῆς;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅπου τὸ χαίρειν μηδαμοῦ νομίζεται.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἦ καὶ τοιαύτας τῷδ' ἐπιρροιζεῖς φυγάς;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

425 φονεὺς γὰρ εἶναι μητρὸς ἠξιώσατο.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἆρ' ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἤ τινος τρέων κότον;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῦ γὰρ τοσοῦτο κέντρον ὡς μητροκτονεῖν;

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

δυοῖν παρόντοιν ἥμισυς λόγου πάρα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ὅρκον οὐ δεξαιτ' ἄν, οὐ δοῦναι θέλοι.

422 *ποῦ τὸ* Arnaldus: *τοῦτο* codd.
422 *φυγῆς* Auratus or Portus: *σφαγῆς* codd.
426 *ἆρ' ἐξ* Blaydes (cf. Σ^{M} *μὴ ἐξ ἀνάγκης τοῦτο πεποίηκεν;*): *ἄλλης* codd.
426 *ἤ τινος* (or *ἢ τίνος*) *f*: *οὔτινος* M, Σ^{M} 465.
429 *θέλοι* Schütz: *θέλει* codd.

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[104] The Furies are, in effect, challenging Orestes to a contest of oaths: they will swear that he killed his mother, and he must swear that he did not or, if he refuses to do so, lose his case. Orestes, of course, could not possibly accept this challenge, and

ATHENA

And where does the killer's flight end?

CHORUS

Where joy is not customary in any circumstances.

ATHENA

And is that the kind of flight into which you are harrying this man?

CHORUS

Yes, because he saw fit to become the murderer of his mother.

ATHENA

Was that because of compulsion, or because he was in fear of someone's wrath?

CHORUS

Why, what goad is there so powerful that it can drive one to commit matricide?

ATHENA

Two parties are present: I have had only half the story.

CHORUS

He will not accept our oath, nor be willing to offer his own.[104]

Athena—taking note, no doubt, of how the Furies evaded her very pertinent question about what caused Orestes to act as he did—perceives that the challenge is a ploy designed to secure Orestes' condemnation on an issue which is not in dispute (whether Orestes actually killed his mother) while avoiding the issue which *is* in dispute (whether the killing was justified or excusable). On the oath-challenge procedure in classical Athenian courts see D. C. Mirhady, *CQ* 41 (1991) 78–83.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

κλύειν δίκαιος μᾶλλον ἢ πρᾶξαι θέλεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς δή; δίδαξον· τῶν σοφῶν γὰρ οὐ πένῃ.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ὅρκοις τὰ μὴ δίκαια μὴ νικᾶν λέγω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἐξέλεγχε, κρῖνε δ' εὐθεῖαν δίκην.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἦ κἀπ' ἐμοὶ τρέποιτ' ἂν αἰτίας τέλος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς δ' οὔ, σεβούσῃ γ' ἄξι' ἀντ' ἐπαξίων;

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

τί πρὸς τάδ' εἰπεῖν, ὦ ξέν', ἐν μέρει θέλεις;
λέξας δὲ χώραν καὶ γένος καὶ ξυμφορὰς
τὰς σὰς ἔπειτα τῶνδ' ἀμυνάθου ψόγον,
εἴπερ πεποιθὼς τῇ δίκῃ βρέτας τόδε
ἧσαι φυλάσσων ἑστίας ἀμῆς πέλας,

430 δίκαιος Dindorf: δικαίως M^{s} *f*: δικαίους (*ου* in an erasure) M.
435 σεβούσῃ anon.: σέβουσαι M: σέβομαί *f*: σέβοιμέν *z*.
435 ἄξι' ἀντ' Hermann: ἀξίαν τ' codd.
438 τῶνδ' *f*: τόνδ' M.
440 ἀμῆς M: ἐμῆς *f*.

ATHENA

You're more concerned to have a *reputation* for justice than to *act* with justice.

CHORUS

How do you mean? Explain—you're not lacking in cleverness.

ATHENA

I say that an unjust cause should not gain victory by means of oaths.

CHORUS

Well, question him, and give an upright judgement.

ATHENA

Do you really wish to entrust the final decision on your charge to me?

CHORUS

We do indeed, as a worthy return for the worthy respect you have shown us.

ATHENA [*turning to* ORESTES]

Stranger, what do you wish to say in your turn in reply to this? Tell me your country, your family and your misfortunes, and then rebut the charge these accusers have brought, if it is indeed with trust in justice that you are sitting keeping your vigil at this image near my hearth,

σεμνὸς προσίκτωρ μὴ 'ν τρόποις Ἰξίονος.
τούτοις ἀμείβου πᾶσιν εὐμαθές τί μοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄνασσ' Ἀθάνα, πρῶτον ἐκ τῶν ὑστάτων
τῶν σῶν ἐπῶν μέλημ' ἀφαιρήσω μέγα.
οὐκ εἰμὶ προστρόπαιος, οὐδ' ἔχων μύσος
πρὸς χειρὶ τἠμῇ τὸ σὸν ἐφεζόμην βρέτας.
τεκμήριον δὲ τῶνδέ σοι λέξω μέγα·
ἄφθογγον εἶναι τὸν παλαμναῖον νόμον,
ἔστ' ἂν πρὸς ἀνδρὸς αἵματος καθαρσίου
σφαγαὶ καθαιμάξωσι νεοθήλου βοτοῦ.
πάλαι πρὸς ἄλλοις ταῦτ' ἀφιερώμεθα
οἴκοισι, καὶ βοτοῖσι καὶ ῥυτοῖς πόροις.
ταύτην μὲν οὕτω φροντίδ' ἐκποδὼν λέγω·
γένος δὲ τοὐμὸν ὡς ἔχει πεύσῃ τάχα.
Ἀργεῖός εἰμι, πατέρα δ' ἱστορεῖς καλῶς,

441 μὴ 'ν West: ἐν M^{s} *f*: om. M (leaving 6–7 letter spaces blank).
445 ἔχων Wieseler: ἔχει codd.
446 ἐφεζόμην Wieseler: ἐφεζομένη codd.
450 -ωσι νεοθήλου Turnebus: -ουσιν οθήλου (οθηλοῦ M^{ac}) M: -ουσιν ὀθνείου *f*.

105 Ixion, who had murdered his father-in-law (treacherously and without provocation, in order to avoid paying his just debts), supplicated Zeus for purification, was granted it, and proved himself utterly unworthy of this divine favour by attempting to seduce Hera: see Pindar, *Pythian* 2.21–48 (with scholia) and Diodorus

a suppliant deserving respect, not one after the manner of Ixion.[105] To all this, give me a reply that I can readily understand.

ORESTES

Lady Athena, I will begin from your last words by removing a great anxiety. I am not a suppliant seeking purification, and I have not sat down clasping your image with pollution on my hand. I will give you powerful proof of this. It is the law that a man who has committed homicide must not speak until blood has dripped over him from the slaughter of a young sucking beast at the hands of a man who can cleanse blood-pollution. I have long since been purified in this way at other houses,[106] both by animal victims and by flowing streams.[107] That is what I say to set this anxiety aside; now you will quickly learn my origin. I am an Argive, and you know my father well—Agamemnon, com-

Siculus 4.69.3–5. A suppliant "with trust in justice [and] deserving respect" would thus certainly not be one "after the manner of Ixion" (and hence I have adopted West's tentative insertion of a negative in the text—see *Studies* 280–1); and Orestes evidently also detects in Athena's words some concern as to whether he, like Ixion, is still under blood-pollution, as one would *prima facie* expect a suppliant homicide to be.

[106] The plurals οἴκοισι . . . βοτοῖσι . . . πόροις indicate that Orestes is claiming to have been ritually purified not only at Delphi but also at one or more (unspecified) other locations. There was a local tradition of such a purification at Trozen (Pausanias 2.31.4) and there may well have been other such traditions elsewhere.

[107] Water as well as blood was used in purification rites; see R. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983) 226–7.

Ἀγαμέμνον', ἀνδρῶν ναυβατῶν ἁρμόστορα,
ξὺν ᾧ σὺ †Τροίαν† ἄπολιν Ἰλίου πόλιν
ἔθηκας. ἔφθιθ' οὕτος οὐ καλῶς, μολὼν
εἰς οἶκον· ἀλλά νιν κελαινόφρων ἐμὴ
μήτηρ κατέκτα ποικίλοις ἀγρεύμασιν
κρύψασ', ἃ λουτρῶν ἐξεμαρτύρει φόνον.
κἀγὼ κατελθών, τὸν πρὸ τοῦ φεύγων χρόνον,
ἔκτεινα τὴν τεκοῦσαν, οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι,
ἀντικτόνοις ποιναῖσι φιλτάτου πατρός.
καὶ τῶνδε κοινῇ Λοξίας μεταίτιος,
ἄλγη προφωνῶν ἀντίκεντρα καρδίᾳ,
εἰ μή τι τῶνδ' ἔρξοιμι τοὺς ἐπαιτίους.
σὺ δ' εἰ δικαίως εἴτε μή, κρῖνον δίκην·
πράξας γὰρ ἐν σοὶ πανταχῇ τάδ' αἰνέσω.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

τὸ πρᾶγμα μεῖζον, εἴ τις οἴεται τόδε
βροτὸς διαιρεῖν· οὐδὲ μὴν ἐμοὶ θέμις
φόνου δικάζειν ὀξυμηνίτους δίκας,
ἄλλως τε καὶ σὺ μὲν κατηρτυκὼς †ὅμως†
ἱκέτης προσῆλθες καθαρὸς ἀβλαβὴς δόμοις,

457 Τροίαν codd.: Τρωσὶν Headlam: perh. e.g. ⟨δή ποτ'⟩.
461 κρύψασ', ἃ λουτρῶν Musgrave: κρύψασα λουτρῶν M: κρύψασα, λουτρὸν δ' *f*. 465 μεταίτιος Weil: ἐπαίτιος codd. 467 ἔρξοιμι Headlam: ἔρξαιμι codd.
471–2 διαιρεῖν . . . δικάζειν West: δικάζειν . . . διαιρεῖν codd.
472 φόνου Robortello: φόνους codd.
472 ὀξυμηνίτους Auratus or Portus, cf. Σ^{M} ἐφ' οἷς . . . μηνίσουσιν: ὀξυμηνίτου codd.

mander of the men who sailed in ships, the man together with whom you ‹once›[108] caused the city of Ilium to be a city no more. He perished ingloriously when he came home: my black-hearted mother killed him after shrouding him in a richly embroidered net, which testified[109] to his murder in the bath. And when I returned home, having previously been in exile, I killed my mother—I will not deny it—putting her to death in return and requital for my beloved father. And for this Loxias jointly shares the responsibility, because he foretold painful sufferings, which acted like goads to my heart, if I did not do something to[110] those responsible for this crime. Now I ask you to judge the issue of whether I did it with justice or not; however I fare at your hands, I shall be content with the outcome.

ATHENA

The matter is too great for any mortal who may think he can decide it; but neither is it proper for me to judge a case of murder which can give rise to fierce wrath—especially since you have approached this temple, disciplined by suffering,[111] as a pure and harmless suppliant, while these be-

[108] I translate my tentative conjecture, taking Τροίαν to have originated from a gloss on Ἰλίου πόλιν. Athena can be credited with the destruction of Troy because she inspired Epeius to build the Wooden Horse (*Odyssey* 8.493, cf. *Iliad* 15.70–71; *Little Iliad* Arg. §4 West). [109] Cf. *Cho.* 987, 1010.

[110] i.e. kill (just as παθεῖν τι can mean "die").

[111] I translate the conjecture of Podlecki (modifying an earlier suggestion by Burges).

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473 ὅμως M G F E^{pc} *z*: νόμως E^{ac}: ἐμοῖς Pauw: πόνῳ Podlecki (πόνοις Burges).

αὗται δ' ἔχουσι μοῖραν οὐκ εὐπέμπελον,
κἂν μὴ τύχωσι πράγματος νικηφόρου,
χώρᾳ μεταῦθις ἰὸς ἐκ φρονημάτων
πέδῳ πεσὼν ἄφερτος αἰανὴς νόσος.
τοιαῦτα μὲν τάδ' ἐστίν· ἀμφότερα, μένειν
πέμπειν †δὲ δυσπήματ' ἀμηχάνως ἐμοί†.
ἐπει δὲ πρᾶγμα δεῦρ' ἀπέσκηψεν τόδε,
ὅμως ἀμόμφους ὄντας αἱροῦμαι πόλει
φόνων δικαστάς, ὁρκίων αἰδουμένους
θεσμόν, τὸν εἰς ἅπαντ' ἐγὼ θήσω χρόνον.
ὑμεῖς δὲ μαρτύριά τε καὶ τεκμήρια
καλεῖσθ' ἀρωγὰ τῆς δίκης ὀρθώματα·
κρίνασα δ' ἀστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν τὰ βέλτατα
ἥξω διαιρεῖν τοῦτο πρᾶγμ' ἐτητύμως,
ὅρκον περῶντας μηδὲν ἐκδίκοις φρεσίν.

475 transposed by Lobel to follow 482.

477 κἂν μὴ τύχωσι M. Schmidt: καὶ μὴ τυχοῦσαι codd.

481 so codd. (δὲ <δὴ> *z*, ἀμηχάνων E): πέμπειν αὐτὰς ἀμηνίτως δυσχερές ἐστιν ἐμοί Σ^{M}: τε for δὲ Bourdelot: δυσπήματ' Scaliger, δυσπάλαμ' Hartung: ἀμηνίτως ἐμοί Tyrwhitt: perh. τ' ἀμηνίτως ἐμοὶ δυσμήχανα.

475 ἀμόμφους ὄντας Lobel: δ' ἄμομφον ὄντα σ' codd.

483 αἰδουμένους Conington: αἱρουμένους codd.

486 ὀρθώματα Pauw: ὁρκώματα codd. (in M κώ is written over an erasure).

489 placed here by M: in *f* it follows 485.

489 ἐκδίκοις Musgrave: ἔκδικον M: ἔνδικον *f*.

ings have an allotted function that is hard to dismiss, and if they do not get a victorious outcome, the poison that will afterwards fall from their outraged pride into the soil will be an unbearable, unending plague for this land. That is how it is: both options, to let you remain or to send you away,[112] are very hard for me to take without incurring wrath.[113] Nevertheless, since this matter has fallen upon us here, I shall choose for my city men without fault to be judges of homicide, respecting the ordinance of an oath which I shall establish for all time. [*Addressing both* ORESTES *and the* CHORUS] Will you please collect[114] testimonies and proofs as supporting props for your pleas; I will come back when I have chosen the best among my citizens to decide this issue well and truly, not being led by unrighteous thoughts to violate their oath in any way at all.

[*Exit* ATHENA.]

112 This must be addressed to Orestes (cf. 473), not the Furies: the possibility that the Furies may remain in Athens is not raised by anyone until 711 at least, and perhaps not until 804–7.

113 This is the meaning given by the scholia and required by the context; but while ἀμηνίτως can be restored with confidence, there is no simple emendation of the unmetrical δυσπήματ' that gives the required sense (except Hartung's δυσπάλαμν'—but δυσπάλαμνος is nowhere attested, and εὐπάλαμνος not till Byzantine times). My tentative emendation is based on an earlier suggestion by Thomson (δυσμήχανον πέμπειν τ' ἀμηνίτως ἐμοί). Athena will incur the Furies' wrath if she decides in Orestes' favour, and the wrath of the betrayed suppliant (cf. 233–4) if she decides against him.

114 lit. "summon".

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α νῦν καταστροφαὶ νόμων
θεσμίων, εἰ κρατή-
σει δίκα τε καὶ βλάβα
τοῦδε ματροκτόνου.
πάντας ἤδη τόδ' ἔργον εὐχερεί-
ᾳ συναρμόσει βροτούς.
πολλὰ δ' ἔτυμα παιδότρωτα
πάθεα προσμένει τοκεῦ-
σιν μεταῦθις ἐν χρόνῳ.

ἀντ. α οὐδὲ γὰρ βροτοσκόπων
μαινάδων τῶνδ' ἐφέρ-
ψει κότος τιν' ἐργμάτων·
πάντ' ἐφήσω μόρον.
σπεύσεται δ' ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν, προφω-
νων τὰ τῶν πέλας κακά,
λῆξιν ὑπόδοσίν τε μόχθων,
ἄκεά τ' οὐ βέβαια τέμ-
νων μάταν παρηγορεῖ.

στρ. β μηδέ τις κικλῃσκέτω
ξυμφορᾷ τετυμμένος

490 *νόμων* H. L. Ahrens: *νέων* codd.
492 *τε καὶ* Heath: *καὶ* codd.
499 *οὐδὲ* Elmsley: *οὔτε* codd.
501 *τιν'* Weil: *τις* codd.
503 *σπεύσεται* Wecklein: *πεύσεται* codd.

CHORUS

Now comes the overthrow of ordained
laws, if the injurious cause
of this slayer of his mother
is going to prevail.
This event will at once unite
all mortals in total licentiousness.
Many very real sufferings,
wounds inflicted by their children, await parents
in the future, as time passes.

For no one will be assailed by wrath arising from such
deeds,
not even the wrath of us wild beings
who watch all that mortals do:
I will unleash every kind of death upon them.
Proclaiming loudly the evils that have befallen their
neighbours,
they will search eagerly far and wide[115]
for something to end or abate their troubles,
but the remedies they prepare will not be efficacious
and their efforts to allay the plague will be vain.

And let no one call on us
when struck by disaster,

115 lit. "one from one place, another from another".

505 *ὑπόδοσίν* Mpc: *ὑπὸδυσιν* Mac: *ὑπόδυσίν z*: *ὑπόδησιν f*: Σ^{M} glosses with *διαδοχήν*.

506 *τέμνων* Blaydes: *τλάμων δέ τις* codd. (*δέ τις* del. Schwenck).

τοῦτ᾽ ἔπος θροούμενος,
"ὦ Δίκα,
ὦ θρόνοι τ᾽ Ἐρινύων".
ταῦτά τις τάχ᾽ ἂν πατὴρ
ἢ τεκοῦσα νεοπαθὴς
οἶκτον οἰκτίσαιτ᾽, ἐπει-
δὴ πίτνει δόμος Δίκας.

ἀντ. β ἔσθ᾽ ὅπου τὸ δεινὸν εὖ
καὶ φρενῶν ἐπίσκοπον
δεῖμ᾽ ἄνω καθήμενον·
ξυμφέρει
σωφρονεῖν ὑπὸ στένει.
τίς δὲ μηδὲν ἐν †φάει†
καρδίαν ἀνὴρ τρέφων
ἢ πόλις βροτῶν ὁμοί-
ως ἔτ᾽ ἂν σέβοι Δίκαν;

στρ. γ μήτ᾽ ἄναρκτον βίον
μήτε δεσποτούμενον
αἰνέσῃς·
παντὶ μέσῳ τὸ κράτος θεὸς ὤπασεν, ἄλλ᾽ ἄλλᾳ δ᾽
ἐφορεύει.

511–2 ὦ . . . ὦ Pauw: ἰὼ . . . ἰὼ codd.
519 δεῖμ᾽ ἄνω West: δειμαίνειν codd.
522 φάει codd.: δέει Casaubon: φόβῳ Schütz.
523 ἀνὴρ τρέφων Sommerstein (ἀνὴρ τρέμων Murray): ἀνατρέφων codd.

crying out these words,
"O Justice,
O mighty Furies!"[116]
Some father perhaps
or some mother who has just become a victim
may well lament this lament,
since the house of Justice will have fallen.

There is a proper place for the fear-inspiring,
and for fear to sit high
in the soul as its overseer:
it is beneficial
to learn good sense under the pressure of distress.
What man that does not at all nourish
his heart on ‹fear›[117]—
or what community of men, it makes no difference—
will still revere Justice?

Do not praise
either a life of anarchy
or a life under despotism:
in everything god has given pre-eminence to the mean,
though he governs different spheres in different ways.

116 lit. "O thrones of the Furies".

117 The text is very uncertain, but the sense must be close to this (cf. 699).

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524 *βροτῶν* Blaydes: *βροτός θ'* codd.
529 *παντὶ z*: *ἅπαντι* M *f*.

ξύμμετρον δ' ἔπος λέγω·
δυσσεβίας μὲν ὕβρις τέκος ὡς ἐτύμως,
ἐκ δ' ὑγιείας
φρενῶν ὁ πᾶσιν φίλος
καὶ πολύευκτος ὄλβος.

ἀντ. γ εἰς τὸ πᾶν σοι λέγω·
βωμὸν αἴδεσαι Δίκας,
μηδέ νιν
κέρδος ἰδὼν ἀθέῳ ποδὶ λὰξ ἀτίσῃς· ποινὰ γὰρ
ἕπεσται·
κύριον μένει τέλος.
πρὸς τάδε τις τοκέων σέβας εὖ προτίων
καὶ ξενοτίμους
ἐπιστροφὰς δωμάτων
αἰδόμενός τις ἔστω.

στρ. δ ἐκ τῶνδ' ἀνάγκας ἄτερ δίκαιος ὢν
οὐκ ἄνολβος ἔσται,
πανώλεθρος δ' οὔποτ' ἂν γένοιτο.
τὸν ἀντίτολμον δέ φαμι, παρβάδαν
ἄγοντα πολλὰ παντόφυρτ' ἄνευ δίκας,

538 σοι Lachmann (after Pauw): δέ σοι codd.
547 ἐπιστροφὰς δωμάτων Heath: δωμάτων ἐπιστροφὰς codd.
552 δ' Pauw: om. codd.
553 παρβάδαν Weil (after Blomfield), cf. Σ^{M} παραβεβηκότα: περβάδαν *f*: περαιβάδαν M.

I speak a word that fits together with that:
Outrage is in very truth the child of Impiety,
but from a healthy mind
springs prosperity, dear to all
and much prayed for.

I say to you, as a universal rule:
respect the altar of Justice,
and do not,
with a view to gain, spurn and trample it with godless
foot, for punishment will follow:
the appointed end awaits.
In view of this, let everyone give proper honour to the
sanctity of parents
and be respectful
of the honour due to guests
from one who is master of a house.

In this way he will be righteous without painful
compulsion,
will not fail to enjoy prosperity,
and will never come to utter destruction.
But he, I say, who audaciously acts contrary to this,
lawlessly
carrying a heavy cargo[118] heaped up in confusion, against
justice,

[118] i.e. amassing great wealth; for the image of the rich man as sea-captain cf. *Ag.* 1005–13.

555 βιαίως ξὺν χρόνῳ καθήσειν
λαῖφος, ὅταν λάβῃ πόνος,
θρανομένας κεραίας.

ἀντ. δ καλεῖ δ' ἀκούοντας οὐδὲν ἐν μέσᾳ
δυσπαλεῖ τε δίνᾳ·
560 γελᾷ δὲ δαίμων ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θερμῷ,
τὸν οὔποτ' αὐχοῦντ' ἰδὼν ἀμηχάνοις
δύαις λαπαδνὸν οὐδ' ὑπερθέοντ' ἄκραν·
δι' αἰῶνος δὲ τὸν πρὶν ὄλβον
ἔρματι προσβαλὼν Δίκας
565 ὤλετ' ἄκλαυτος, ᾇστος.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

κήρυσσε, κῆρυξ, καὶ στρατὸν κατειργάθου,
εἰς οὐρανὸν δὲ διάτορος Τυρσηνικὴ
σάλπιγξ βροτείου πνεύματος πληρουμένη

554 ἄγοντα K. O. Müller: τὰ codd.
558 ἐν μέσᾳ Heath: μέσᾳ codd.
559 δυσπαλεῖ τε Turnebus: δυσπαλεῖται (δυσπλανεῖται E) codd.
560 θερμῷ *z*: θερμοεργῷ (θυμοεργῷ G) codd.
562 λαπαδνὸν Musgrave: λεπαδνὸν codd.
567 εἰς οὐρανὸν δὲ Wecklein: εἴτ' οὖν codd. (ἤ Ms, i.e. ἤ τ' οὖν).

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119 i.e. the gods.
120 lit. "hot".
121 This is the number that seems to me most consistent with the structure of 711–733 (ten couplets and a triplet) and the lan-

will in the end be forced to lower
sail, when trouble takes hold of him,
by the shattering of his yard-arm.

In the middle of the eddies, unable to fight his way out,
he calls, but they[119] pay no heed;
the deity laughs at the headstrong[120] man,
seeing him powerless, the one who boasted it could
never happen,
in helpless distress, as he fails to surmount the crest of
the wave:
he has wrecked the ship of his former lifelong prosperity
on the reef of Justice
and perishes unwept, unseen.

[*ATHENA returns, accompanied by a herald, a trumpeter, and eleven*[121] *judges. The essential paraphernalia of a law-court have been set in place: a chair for* ATHENA *as presiding officer, benches for the judges, and a table with two voting-urns.* ATHENA *takes her seat.*]

ATHENA

Herald, make proclamation, and call the public to order;
and let the piercing Etruscan trumpet,[122] filled with human breath, sound heavenward and exhibit its shrill voice

guage of 735 and 753 (see my edition of *Eumenides* [Cambridge, 1989], pp. 222–4), but a jury of ten is also a possibility.

[122] This is our earliest reference to the tradition that the trumpet was an Etruscan invention; cf. Sophocles, *Ajax* 17; Euripides, *Children of Heracles* 831.

ὑπέρτονον γήρυμα φαινέτω στρατῷ·
πληρουμένου γὰρ τοῦδε βουλευτηρίου
σιγᾶν ἀρήγει καὶ μαθεῖν θεσμοὺς ἐμοὺς
πόλιν τε πᾶσαν εἰς τὸν αἰανῆ χρόνον
καὶ τούσδ', ὅπως ἂν εὖ καταγνωσθῇ δίκη.
ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, ὧν ἔχεις αὐτὸς κράτει.
τί τοῦδέ σοι μέτεστι πράγματος λέγε.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

καὶ μαρτυρήσων ἦλθον—ἔστι γὰρ νόμῳ
ἱκέτης ὅδ' ἀνὴρ καὶ δόμων ἐφέστιος
ἐμῶν, φόνου δὲ τῷδ' ἐγὼ καθάρσιος—
καὶ ξυνδικήσων αὐτός· αἰτίαν δ' ἔχω
τῆς τοῦδε μητρὸς τοῦ φόνου. σὺ δ' εἴσαγε
ὅπως τ' ἐπιστᾷ τήνδε κύρωσον δίκην.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ὑμῶν ὁ μῦθος, εἰσάγω δὲ τὴν δίκην·
ὁ γὰρ διώκων πρότερος ἐξ ἀρχῆς λέγων
γένοιτ' ἂν ὀρθὸς πράγματος διδάσκαλος.

573 *τούσδ'* Hermann: *τόνδ'* M E: *τῶνδ'* G F *z*, $^{i}\Sigma^{M}$ (*τῶν Ἀρεοπαγιτῶν*).
576 *νόμῳ* Erfurdt: *δόμων* M^{pc} *f*: *δήμων* M^{ac} (?)
578 *τῷδ'* Paley: *τοῦδ'* codd.
580 *τοῦ* Turnebus: *τοῦδε* codd.
581 *ὅπως τ'* Turnebus: *ὅπως* codd.
584 *ὀρθὸς* Sommerstein: *ὀρθῶς* M.

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123 i.e. the theatre audience.
124 Grammatically speaking, *τούσδ'* could also denote the par-

to the host. For now that this council is being convened, it will be helpful if all are silent and attentive to my ordinances—both the whole city for all time to come[123] and also these men [*indicating the judges*],[124] so that the case may be properly decided.

[*The trumpet is sounded, and the herald is about to make his proclamation when he is forestalled by the unexpected arrival of* APOLLO.]

Lord Apollo, rule over your own domain. Say what concern you have with this dispute.

APOLLO

I have come to bear witness—for this man is a lawful suppliant who came to the hearth of my house, and it was I who purified him from the taint of homicide—and also to speak myself as his advocate. I bear the responsibility for the killing of this man's mother. Do you please bring this case before the court, and determine it to the best of your wisdom.

ATHENA [*to the* CHORUS]

It is for you to speak; I do hereby bring the case before the court. The prosecutor, if he speaks first and tells the tale from the beginning, can give us proper information about the case.

ties to the case (Orestes and the Furies). When, though, Athena finally delivers the speech embodying her "ordinances" (681–710; note its opening, κλύοιτ' ἂν ἤδη θεσμόν), she does not address the parties at all: her first and last lines (681–2, 708b-710) are addressed to the judges, and the rest of the speech to "my citizens for the future" (707–8).

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλαὶ μέν ἐσμεν, λέξομεν δὲ συντόμως·
ἔπος δ' ἀμείβου πρὸς ἔπος ἐν μέρει τιθείς.
τὴν μητέρ' εἰπὲ πρῶτον εἰ κατέκτονας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔκτεινα· τούτου δ' οὔτις ἄρνησις πέλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἓν μὲν τόδ' ἤδη τῶν τριῶν παλαισμάτων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ κειμένῳ πω τόνδε κομπάζεις λόγον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰπεῖν γε μέντοι δεῖ σ' ὅπως κατέκτανες.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λέγω· ξιφουλκῷ †χειρὶ πρὸς† δέρην τεμών.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς τοῦ δὲ πεισθεὶς καὶ τίνος βουλεύμασιν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τοῖς τοῦδε θεσφάτοισι· μαρτυρεῖ δέ μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ μάντις ἐξηγεῖτό σοι μητροκτονεῖν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ δεῦρό γ' αἰεὶ τὴν τύχην οὐ μέμφομαι.

592 *χειρὶ πρὸς* M: *χειρὶ διὰ* Blaydes: *δεξιᾷ* Weil.
593 *δὲ πεισθεὶς* Burges: *δ' ἐπείσθης* M.

CHORUS

We are many, but we will speak briefly; and you [*to* ORESTES] will answer us in your turn, point by point.[125] First of all, say whether you are the killer of your mother.

ORESTES

I did kill her; there can be no denying that.

CHORUS

That is already one of the three falls we need.[126]

ORESTES

You're boasting like that over me when I'm not yet on the floor!

CHORUS

But still, you next have to say *how* you killed her.

ORESTES

I do say it: sword in hand, by cutting her throat.

CHORUS

And by whose persuasion did you do it, and on whose advice?

ORESTES

The oracular words of the god here; he is my witness.

CHORUS

The prophet god instructed you to kill your mother?

ORESTES

And up to this point I have no fault to find with the outcome.

125 lit. "setting word against word".

126 For the wrestling metaphor cf. *Ag.* 171–2, *Cho.* 339.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ᾽ εἴ σε μάρψει ψῆφος, ἀλλ᾽ ἐρεῖς τάχα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πέποιθ᾽· ἀρωγὰς δ᾽ ἐκ τάφου πέμψει πατήρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νεκροῖσί νυν πέπισθι μητέρα κτανών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δυοῖν γὰρ εἶχε προσβολὰς μιασμάτοιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς δη; δίδαξον τοὺς δικάζοντας τάδε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀνδροκτονοῦσα πατέρ᾽ ἐμὸν κατέκτανεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί γάρ; σὺ μὲν ζῇς, ἡ δ᾽ ἐλευθέρα φόνῳ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δ᾽ οὐκ ἐκείνην ζῶσαν ἤλαυνες φυγῇ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἦν ὅμαιμος φωτὸς ὃν κατέκτανεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ μητρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς ἐν αἵματι;

598 *πέμψει* Σ^{M}: *πέμπει* M.
600 *μιασμάτοιν* Elmsley: *μιασμάτων* M.
603 *τί γάρ;* Hermann: *τοιγὰρ* M.
603 *φόνῳ* Schütz: *φόνου* M.

CHORUS

Well, if the verdict nets you, you'll soon be saying something different!

ORESTES

I have confidence in him, and my father will send aid from his tomb.

CHORUS

Yes, trust in the dead, after killing your mother!

ORESTES

I did so because she had the contagion of a double pollution.

CHORUS

How so? Explain your meaning to the judges.

ORESTES

She killed her husband and my father.

CHORUS

So what? *You're* alive; *her* murder has freed her from guilt.

ORESTES

But why didn't you hound her into flight while she lived?

CHORUS

She wasn't of the same blood as the man she killed.

ORESTES

And I *am* blood-kin to my mother?

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γάρ σ' ἔθρεψεν ἐντός, ὦ μιαιφόνε,
ζώνης; ἀπεύχου μητρὸς αἷμα φίλτατον;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἤδη σὺ μαρτύρησον, ἐξηγοῦ δέ μοι,
Ἄπολλον, εἴ σφε σὺν δίκῃ κατέκτανον.
δρᾶσαι γάρ, ὥσπερ ἐστίν, οὐκ ἀρνούμεθα·
ἀλλ' εἰ δικαίως εἴτε μὴ τῇ σῇ φρενὶ
δοκῶ, τόδ' αἷμα κρῖνον, ὡς τούτοις φράσω.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

λέξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς, τόνδ' Ἀθηναίας μέγαν
θεσμόν, "δικαίως", μάντις ὢν δ' οὐ ψεύσομαι.
οὐπώποτ' εἶπον μαντικοῖσιν ἐν θρόνοις,
οὐκ ἀνδρός, οὐ γυναικός, οὐ πόλεως πέρι,
ὃ μὴ 'κέλευσε Ζεὺς Ὀλυμπίων πατήρ.
τὸ μὲν δίκαιον τοῦθ' ὅσον σθένει μαθεῖν,
βουλῇ πιφαύσκω δ' ὕμμ' ἐπισπέσθαι πατρός·
ὅρκος γὰρ οὔτι Ζηνὸς ἰσχύει πλέον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ζεύς, ὡς λέγεις σύ, τόνδε χρησμὸν ὤπασε
φράζειν Ὀρέστῃ τῷδε, τὸν πατρὸς φόνον
πράξαντα μητρὸς μηδαμοῦ τιμὰς νέμειν;

613 δοκῶ van Herwerden: δοκεῖ M.
615 ὢν δ' Canter: δ' ὢν M.
618 'κέλευσε Porson: κελεύσει M.

CHORUS

How else did she nourish you, you filthy murderer, beneath her girdle?[127] Do you disavow your mother's blood, the nearest and dearest to your own?

ORESTES [*turning to APOLLO*]

Testify now for me, Apollo, and expound whether I killed her with justice. That I did the deed, as is the fact, I do not deny; but judge this bloodshed, whether I seem in your eyes to have done it justly or not, so that I may tell this court.

APOLLO [*to the court*]

I shall say to you, to this great institution ordained by Athena, "justly"; and, as a seer, I shall not be telling a lie. I have never said anything on my prophetic throne—not about a man, not about a woman, not about a city—except at the bidding of Zeus, father of the Olympians. I tell you solemnly to understand well how strong is this plea of justification, and I tell you to follow the counsel of the Father; for an oath can in no way be stronger than Zeus.[128]

CHORUS

Zeus, according to you, gave you this oracle to tell to this man Orestes, that in avenging the murder of his father he should take no account at all of the rights of his mother?

[127] It was believed that the embryo received nourishment through blood-vessels in the umbilical cord, whose origin was in the mother's heart or liver (Empedocles A79 D-K; Aristotle, *De Generatione Animalium* 740a24–36).

[128] This can only be a thinly veiled recommendation to the judges to disregard their oath to judge fairly between the parties (contrast 680, 710).

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

οὐ γάρ τι ταὐτὸν ἄνδρα γενναῖον θανεῖν
διοσδότοις σκήπτροισι τιμαλφούμενον,
καὶ ταῦτα πρὸς γυναικός, οὔ τι θουρίοις
τόξοις ἐκηβόλοισιν ὥστ' Ἀμαζόνος,
ἀλλ' ὡς ἀκούσῃ, Παλλάς, οἵ τ' ἐφήμενοι
ψήφῳ διαιρεῖν τοῦδε πράγματος πέρι.
ἀπὸ στρατείας γάρ νιν, ἠμπολημένον
τὰ πλεῖστ' ἄμεινον, εὔφροσιν δεδεγμένη
<
δροίτῃ περῶντι λουτρά; κἀπὶ τέρματι
φάρος περεσκήνωσεν, ἐν δ' ἀτέρμονι
κόπτει πεδήσασ' ἄνδρα δαιδάλῳ πέπλῳ.
ἀνδρὸς μὲν ὑμῖν οὗτος εἴρηται μόρος
τοῦ παντοσέμνου, τοῦ στρατηλάτου νεῶν·
<
ταύτην τοιαύτην εἶπον, ὡς δηχθῇ λεώς,
ὅσπερ τέτακται τήνδε κυρῶσαι δίκην.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πατρὸς προτιμᾷ Ζεὺς μόρον τῷ σῷ λόγῳ·

631 *νιν* Porson: *μιν* M. 632/3 lacuna posited by Schütz: ‹*λόγοις, παρέστη θέρμ' ἐν ἀργυρηλάτῳ*› e.g. Headlam.
637/8 lacuna posited by Headlam.

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129 Cf. *Ag.* 43–44. 130 A line is missing in M (in this passage the only authoritative manuscript); Headlam's supplement, which I translate, cannot be far from the sense of what is lost.

APOLLO

Yes, because it is simply not the same thing—the death of a noble man, honoured with a royal sceptre granted him by Zeus,[129] and that too at the hands of a woman, and then not by the far-shooting martial bow of, say, an Amazon, but in the manner of which you shall hear, Pallas, and you who are sitting with her to decide this case by your votes. When he returned from his expedition, which had been for the most part a successful venture, she welcomed him with kindly ‹words and attended him› when he was having a ‹hot› bath ‹in a silver› tub,[130] and then at the end spread a garment over him like a tent, hobbled the man in an endless robe[131] she had craftily devised, and struck him down. This that I have told you is the story of the death of the man whom all revered, the commander of the fleet . . .

Here several lines may be missing, containing an emotive and hostile characterization of CLYTAEMESTRA.

. . . I have described her in this way so that the body of men,[132] appointed to determine this case, may be stung to anger.

CHORUS

On your account, Zeus sets a higher value on the death of a

131 See note on *Ag.* 1382.

132 lit. "people, host"; the same word is also applied to the judges at 681. It is probably designed to suggest that they are acting on behalf of, and as representatives of, the Athenian people as a whole—and indeed both Orestes and the Furies will treat the judges' verdict as if it were the action of the whole people, and declare their intention to reward or punish the whole city.

αὐτὸς δ' ἔδησε πατέρα πρεσβύτην Κρόνον.
πῶς ταῦτα τούτοις οὐκ ἐναντίως λέγεις;
ὑμᾶς δ' ἀκούειν ταῦτ' ἐγὼ μαρτύρομαι.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ὦ παντομισῆ κνώδαλα, στύγη θεῶν,
πέδας μὲν ἂν λύσειεν· ἔστι τοῦδ' ἄκος
καὶ κάρτα πολλὴ μηχανὴ λυτήριος·
ἀνδρὸς δ' ἐπειδὰν αἷμ' ἀνασπάσῃ κόνις
ἅπαξ θανόντος, οὔτις ἔστ' ἀνάστασις.
τούτων ἐπῳδὰς οὐκ ἐποίησεν πατὴρ
οὑμός, τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω
στρέφων τίθησιν οὐδὲν ἀσθμαίνων μένει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς γὰρ τὸ φεύγειν τοῦδ' ὑπερδικεῖς ὅρα·
τὸ μητρὸς αἷμ' ὅμαιμον ἐκχέας πέδῳ
ἔπειτ' ἐν Ἄργει δώματ' οἰκήσει πατρός;
ποίοισι βωμοῖς χρώμενος τοῖς δημίοις;
ποία δὲ χέρνιψ φρατέρων προσδέξεται;

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133 This is the only passage in tragedy (as distinct from satyr-drama) in which *any* character is addressed as a beast.

134 According to one tradition ([Hesiod], *Works and Days* 173a-c; Pindar, *Olympian* 2.76–77, *Pythian* 4.292; [Aeschylus] fr. 190, 192) Zeus did in fact release Cronus and the Titans from their prison; here, however, we evidently have to assume that he has not done so (cf. *Iliad* 8.478–481; Hesiod, *Theogony* 715–814).

135 lit. "not panting at all".

136 lit. "manage the house of".

father. Yet he himself imprisoned his old father, Cronus. Isn't your statement in contradiction with that? [*To the judges*] I call you to witness that you have heard these words.

APOLLO

You utterly loathsome beasts,[133] hated by the gods! Fetters he can undo:[134] there is a cure for that affliction, and many a device for getting him released. But when once a man has died, and the dust has sucked up his blood, there is no rising again. For that my Father has not created any healing charm, whereas he disposes all other things, turning them this way and that, without any laborious effort,[135] by the sheer power of his will.

CHORUS

Well then, look how you're pleading for *this* man to help him establish a defence! Having spilt on the ground his mother's blood, which is the same as his own, is he then going to enter into the inheritance of[136] his father in Argos? What altars will he use—public ones, that is?[137] What phratry[138] will admit him to its lustral water?[139]

137 The qualification is necessary because a man under pollution could not in practice be prevented from sacrificing at a private altar in his own home, if he was prepared to take the risk of divine displeasure.

138 A phratry was a group of families forming a religious guild. Although phratry membership was not, at least in Athens, a formal prerequisite for citizenship, the normal expectation was that every citizen would belong to a phratry.

139 i.e. to perform the ritual ablution without which he could not take part in the phratry's sacrifices.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

καὶ τοῦτο λέξω, καὶ μάθ' ὡς ὀρθῶς ἐρῶ.
οὐκ ἔστι μήτηρ ἡ κεκλημένη τέκνου
τοκεύς, τροφεὺς δὲ κύματος νεοσπόρου·
τίκτει δ' ὁ θρῴσκων, ἡ δ' ἄπερ ξένῳ ξένη
ἔσωσεν ἔρνος, οἷσι μὴ βλάψῃ θεός.
τεκμήριον δὲ τοῦδέ σοι δείξω λόγου·
πατὴρ μὲν ἂν γείναιτ' ἄνευ μητρός· πέλας
μάρτυς πάρεστι παῖς Ὀλυμπίου Διός,
οὐδ' ἐν σκότοισι νηδύος τεθραμμένη,
ἀλλ' οἷον ἔρνος οὔτις ἂν τέκοι θεά.
ἐγὼ δέ, Παλλάς, τἄλλα θ' ὡς ἐπίσταμαι
τὸ σὸν πόλισμα καὶ στρατὸν τεύξω μέγαν,
καὶ τόνδ' ἔπεμψα σῶν δόμων ἐφέστιον
ὅπως γένοιτο πιστὸς εἰς τὸ πᾶν χρόνου
καὶ τόνδ' ἐπικτήσαιο σύμμαχον, θεά,
καὶ τοὺς ἔπειτα, καὶ τάδ' αἰανῶς μένοι,
στέργειν τὰ πιστὰ τῶνδε τοὺς ἐπισπόρους.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἤδη κελεύω τούσδ' ἀπὸ γνώμης φέρειν

659 *τροφεὺς* Hendry: *τροφὸς* codd.
663 *γείναιτ'* Wieseler, cf. Σ^{M} *γεννήσειεν*: *γένοιτ'* codd.
666 *θεά* Weil: *θεός* codd.

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140 This theory of reproduction is ascribed by Aristotle (*De Generatione Animalium* 763b31–33) to "Anaxagoras and other *φυσιολόγοι*"; we do not know whether Aeschylus himself believed it, or whether his audience would have found it convincing.

APOLLO

I will tell you that too—and mark how rightly I argue. The so-called "mother" is not a parent of the child, only the nurse of the newly-begotten embryo. The parent is he who mounts; the female keeps the offspring safe, like a stranger on behalf of a stranger, for those in whose case this is not prevented by god.[140] I shall give you powerful proof of this statement. A father can procreate without a mother:[141] a witness to this is here close by us [*indicating* ATHENA], the daughter of Olympian Zeus, who was not even nurtured in the darkness of a womb, but is such an offspring as no female divinity could ever bring forth. [*Addressing* ATHENA] Pallas, I mean in all respects, to the best of my ability, to promote the greatness of your city and your people, and in particular I have sent this man to the hearth of your house so that he might become your faithful friend for all time, and so that you might gain him for an ally, goddess, him and his posterity, and so that it might everlastingly remain true that these men's descendants[142] are content with[143] their sworn covenant.

ATHENA

Shall I now instruct these men to cast a vote in accordance

[141] Apollo leaves it to be inferred that a female cannot procreate without a father, but (unlike Orestes in Euripides, *Orestes* 554—if that line is genuine) he does not actually assert this. He could not, in mythological terms, have asserted it truthfully; Hesiod's *Theogony* names dozens of divinities as having been born parthenogenetically with no father, among them Hephaestus (927) and the Keres/Furies themselves (217).

[142] i.e. future generations of Athenians ("these men" being the judges). [143] i.e. have no reason to regret the making of.

ψῆφον δικαίας, ὡς ἅλις λελεγμένων;

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἡμῖν μὲν ἤδη πᾶν τετόξευται βέλος,
μένω δ' ἀκοῦσαι πῶς ἀγὼν κριθήσεται.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

τί γάρ; πρὸς ὑμῶν πῶς τιθεῖσ' ἄμομφος ὦ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἠκούσαθ' ὧν ἠκούσατ', ἐν δὲ καρδίᾳ
ψῆφον φέροντες ὅρκον αἰδεῖσθε, ξένοι.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

κλύοιτ' ἂν ἤδη θεσμόν, Ἀττικὸς λεώς,
πρώτας δίκας κρίνοντες αἵματος χυτοῦ.
ἔσται δὲ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν Αἰγέως στρατῷ
αἰεὶ δικαστῶν τοῦτο βουλευτήριον.
πάγον δ' † Ἄρειον† τόνδ', Ἀμαζόνων ἕδραν
σκηνάς θ', ὅτ' ἦλθον Θησέως κατὰ φθόνον
στρατηλατοῦσαι, καὶ πόλει νεόπτολιν

675 δικαίας Blomfield: δικαίαν codd.
684 δικαστῶν Canter: δ' ἑκάστων M: δ' ἑκάστω *f.*
685 Ἄρειον codd.: ἑδοῦνται Weil: ἑδεῖται Wecklein.
687 πόλει Orelli: πόλιν codd.

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144 An allusion to the actual oath of the Athenian juryman, which included the clause "And in matters about which there are no laws, I will judge in accordance with the most just opinion (*γνώμῃ τῇ δικαιοτάτῃ*)" (Demosthenes 20.118).

145 As transmitted, the sentence beginning here has no main

with their honest opinion,[144] on the ground that there has been sufficient argument?

APOLLO

On our side every arrow has now been shot; I am staying to hear how the trial is decided.

ATHENA [*to the* CHORUS]

What about you? How shall I arrange things so as to be blameless in your eyes?

CHORUS [*to the judges*]

You have heard what you have heard; but when you cast your votes, gentlemen, have respect in your hearts for your oath.

ATHENA

Now hear my ordinance, people of Attica, who are judging this first trial for bloodshed. In time to come also, the people of Aegeus will always have this council of judges. ‹They will sit on›[145] this hill, the abode and camping-place of the Amazons when they came as invaders, out of jealousy of Theseus,[146] fortified this new citadel with high walls oppo-

verb; I assume, with most recent editors, that Ἄρειον is a gloss on πάγον which has displaced the verb.

146 The defeat of the Amazons' invasion was one of the most glorious episodes in Athenian myth, frequently referred to in patriotic oratory. Usually they are said to have been attempting to rescue an Amazon princess whom Theseus had carried off from her homeland in an earlier expedition, but there was another tradition (cf. Lysias 2.4–6) according to which their invasion was an unprovoked act of aggression. There was a sanctuary called the Amazoneion on the alleged site of the Amazons' camp on the Areopagus (Diodorus Siculus 4.28.2–3; Cleidemus, *FGrH* 323 F 18).

τήνδ' ὑψίπυργον ἀντεπύργωσαν τότε,
Ἄρει τ' ἔθυον, ἔνθεν ἔστ' ἐπώνυμος
πέτρα πάγος τ' Ἄρειος. ἐν δὲ τῷ σέβας
ἀστῶν φόβος τε συγγενὴς τὸ μὴ ἀδικεῖν
σχήσει τό τ' ἦμαρ καὶ κατ' εὐφρόνην ὁμῶς,
αὐτῶν πολιτῶν μὴ 'πικαινούντων νόμους·
κακαῖς ἐπιρροαῖσι βορβόρῳ θ' ὕδωρ
λαμπρὸν μιαίνων οὔποθ' εὑρήσεις ποτόν.
τὸ μήτ' ἄναρχον μήτε δεσποτούμενον
ἀστοῖς περιστέλλουσι βουλεύω σέβειν,
καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἔξω βαλεῖν.
τίς γὰρ δεδοικὼς μηδὲν ἔνδικος βροτῶν;
τοιόνδε τοι ταρβοῦντες ἐνδίκως σέβας
ἔρυμά τε χώρας καὶ πόλεως σωτήριον
ἔχοιτ' ἂν οἷον οὔτις ἀνθρώπων ἔχει,
οὔτ' ἐν Σκύθαισιν οὔτε Πέλοπος ἐν τόποις.
κερδῶν ἄθικτον τοῦτο βουλευτήριον,
αἰδοῖον, ὀξύθυμον, εὐδόντων ὕπερ
ἐγρηγορὸς φρούρημα γῆς καθίσταμαι.
ταύτην μὲν ἐξέτειν' ἐμοῖς παραίνεσιν
ἀστοῖσιν εἰς τὸ λοιπόν· ὀρθοῦσθαι δὲ χρὴ

692 *τό τ'* Grotius: *τό,δ'* (i.e. *τὸ δ'*) M^{pc} (?): *τόδ'* M^{ac} *f*.
693 *'πικαινούντων* Stephanus: *'πικαινόντων* codd. (*'πιβαινόντων z*).

147 This aetiology for the name of the Areopagus appears to have been invented by Aeschylus; most of our other sources (start-

site the existing citadel, and sacrificed to Ares, whence this crag and hill was given the name of the Areopagus.[147] Upon it, the respect and inborn fear of the citizens will prevent any wrong being done,[148] alike by day and by night, if the citizens themselves do not make innovative additions to the laws: if you sully clear water with foul infusions of mud, you will never get a drink.[149] I counsel my citizens to maintain, and practise reverently, a system which is neither anarchic nor despotic, and not to cast fear completely out of the city; for what mortal respects justice, if he fears nothing? If, I tell you, you righteously fear an august body like this, you will have a bulwark to keep your land and city safe such as no one in the world has, neither among the Scythians nor in the land of Pelops.[150] This council, untouched by thought of gain, reverend, quick to anger, a wakeful sentinel for the land to protect those who sleep, I hereby establish. I have made this long speech to advise my citizens for the future. Now [*to the judges*] you

ing with Euripides, *Electra* 1258–62) derive the name from the trial of Ares for killing Halirrothius, son of Poseidon.

148 The text could mean that the citizenry will be deterred from wrongdoing by their respect for, and fear of, the Areopagus council, or, equally well, that the council will be deterred from wrongdoing by its respect for, and fear of, the citizenry.

149 On possible interpretations of these lines as commenting on contemporary political issues, see Introduction.

150 i.e. the Peloponnese, in particular its most powerful state Sparta (Aeschylus seems to have forgotten that Athens' new ally Argos was also in the Peloponnese). Both Scythians (e.g. [Aesch.] fr. 198) and Spartans (e.g. Herodotus 1.65–66, Thucydides 1.18.1) were famous for having good laws and faithfully abiding by them (εὐνομία).

καὶ ψῆφον αἴρειν καὶ διαγνῶναι δίκην
αἰδουμένους τὸν ὅρκον. εἴρηται λόγος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν βαρεῖαν τήνδ' ὁμιλίαν χθονὸς
ξύμβουλός εἰμι μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσαι.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

κἄγωγε χρησμοὺς τοὺς ἐμούς τε καὶ Διὸς
ταρβεῖν κελεύω μηδ' ἀκαρπώτους κτίσαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' αἱματηρὰ πράγματ' οὐ λαχὼν σέβεις,
μαντεῖα δ' οὐκέθ' ἁγνὰ μαντεύσῃ νέμων.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἦ καὶ πατήρ τι σφάλλεται βουλευμάτων
πρωτοκτόνοισι προστροπαῖς Ἰξίονος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

λέγεις· ἐγὼ δὲ μὴ τυχοῦσα τῆς δίκης
βαρεῖα χώρᾳ τῇδ' ὁμιλήσω πάλιν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἀλλ' ἔν τε τοῖς νέοισι καὶ παλαιτέροις
θεοῖς ἄτιμος εἶ σύ· νικήσω δ' ἐγώ.

710 *αἰδουμένους* Canter: *αἰδουμένοις* M: *αἰρουμένοις f.*
713 *κἄγωγε* Robortello: *κἀγώ τε* vel sim. codd.
716 *νέμων* Hermann: *μένων* codd.

must rise, deliver your votes, and decide the case, respecting your oath. I have said my say.

[*During each speech of the ensuing altercation, one of the judges goes to the urns, casts his vote, and returns to his seat.*]

CHORUS

And I advise you strictly to avoid dishonouring us, for we can be dangerous company to this land.

APOLLO

And *I* bid you fear the oracles that came from me and Zeus, and not render them fruitless.

CHORUS

You involve yourself with bloodstained activities when that is not your allotted province; in future you will be giving responses dwelling in an unclean oracular sanctuary.

APOLLO

Are you saying that my Father is at all disappointed in the decision he made when Ixion, the first murderer, supplicated him for purification?[151]

CHORUS

You say he isn't; but if I don't get justice, I shall be dangerous company to this land in future.

APOLLO

You receive no honour among either the younger or the older gods. I am going to be victorious.

151 The Furies surprisingly miss an open goal here; see note on 441.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοιαῦτ᾽ ἔδρασας καὶ Φέρητος ἐν δόμοις·
Μοίρας ἔπεισας ἀφθίτους θεῖναι βροτούς.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

οὔκουν δίκαιον τὸν σέβοντ᾽ εὐεργετεῖν,
ἄλλως τε πάντως χὥτε δεόμενος τύχοι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σύ τοι παλαιὰς δαιμονὰς καταφθίσας
οἴνῳ παρηπάτησας ἀρχαιὰς θεάς.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

σύ τοι τάχ᾽ οὐκ ἔχουσα τῆς δίκης τέλος
ἐμῇ τὸν ἰὸν οὐδὲν ἐχθροῖσιν βαρύν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐπεὶ καθιππάζῃ με πρεσβῦτιν νέος,
δίκης γενέσθαι τῆσδ᾽ ἐπήκοος μένω,
ὡς ἀμφίβουλος οὖσα θυμοῦσθαι πόλει.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἐμὸν τόδ᾽ ἔργον, λοισθίαν κρῖναι δίκην·
ψῆφον δ᾽ Ὀρέστῃ τήνδ᾽ ἐγὼ προσθήσομαι.
μήτηρ γὰρ οὔτις ἐστὶν ἥ μ᾽ ἐγείνατο,

727 δαιμονὰς Maas: δαίμονας codd.: διανομὰς Σ Euripides *Alcestis* 12.
733 ἀμφίβουλος F: ἀμφίβολος M G E *z*.

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152 When he saved Pheres' son Admetus from death (though he certainly did not make him "immortal"), on condition that

CHORUS

You did just the same sort of thing in the house of Pheres,[152] inducing the Fates to make mortals immortal.

APOLLO

So was it not right to do good to one who treated me with respect, in any circumstances and especially when he was in need?

CHORUS

You're the one who destroyed the old allotment of power and beguiled those ancient goddesses with wine.

APOLLO

You're the one who shortly, when you fail to gain final victory in the trial, will vomit up your poison and find it does no harm to your enemies.

CHORUS

Since you are riding roughshod over me, the young over the aged, I am waiting to hear the decision of this case, being undecided whether to be angry with this city.

[*ATHENA has come to the urns and is now standing over them, voting-token in hand.*]

ATHENA

This is now my task, to be the last to judge this case; and I shall cast this ballot for Orestes. There is no mother who

someone else was willing to die in his stead; Admetus' wife Alcestis volunteered to do so. Admetus had won Apollo's gratitude by treating him kindly when he had had to serve Admetus as a labourer. The story was later dramatized in Euripides' *Alcestis*.

τὸ δ' ἄρσεν αἰνῶ πάντα, πλὴν γάμου τυχεῖν,
ἅπαντι θυμῷ, κάρτα δ' εἰμὶ τοῦ πατρός·
οὕτω γυναικὸς οὐ προτιμήσω μόρον
ἄνδρα κτανούσης δωμάτων ἐπίσκοπον.
νικᾷ δ' ὁ φεύγων, κἂν ἰσόψηφος κριθῇ.
ἐκβάλλεθ' ὡς τάχιστα τευχέων πάλους,
ὅσοις δικαστῶν τοῦτ' ἐπέσταλται τέλος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ Φοιβ' Ἄπολλον, πῶς ἀγὼν κριθήσεται;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Νύξ, μέλαινα μῆτερ, ἆρ' ὁρᾷς τάδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

νῦν ἀγχόνης μοι τέρματ', ἢ φάος βλέπειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡμῖν γὰρ ἔρρειν, ἢ πρόσω τιμὰς νέμειν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

πεμπάζετ' ὀρθῶς ἐκβολὰς ψήφων, ξένοι,
τὸ μὴ ἀδικεῖν σέβοντες ἐν διαιρέσει.

741 ὁ *φεύγων* West, cf. ΣM 735, 741 ὁ *κατηγορούμενος*: Ὀρέστης codd.

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153 This was the regular rule in Athenian courts (Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens* 69.1). In 330 BC Leocrates, prosecuted by Lycurgus for treason, was acquitted on a tied vote (Aeschines 3.252). 154 Since hanging was not a Greek form of capital punishment, Orestes must be envisaging suicide if convicted. Cf. Aristophanes, *Wasps* 523; Demosthenes 57.70; Aeschines 3.212.

gave birth to me, and I commend the male in all respects (except for joining in marriage) with all my heart: in the fullest sense, I am my Father's child. Therefore I shall not set a higher value on the death of a woman, when she had killed her husband, the guardian of her house. [*She drops her ballot into the urn for acquittal.*] The defendant wins, even if the judges' votes on him are equally divided.[153] Empty the ballots from the urns at once, you of the judges to whom this function has been assigned.

[*ATHENA returns to her seat. While the next few lines are being spoken, two of the judges go up to the urns and turn them upside down on the table.*]

ORESTES

O Phoebus Apollo, how will the verdict turn out?

CHORUS

O black Mother Night, do you see this?

ORESTES

Now for me it's either the fatal noose,[154] or the light of day.

CHORUS

And for us it's either ruin, or continuing to enjoy our privileges.

[*The tellers now lift aside the urns, revealing the two piles of votes, which they count during the following speech.*]

APOLLO

Count the emptied ballots correctly, gentlemen, scrupulously respecting justice in determining the outcome. A

γνώμης ἀπούσης πῆμα γίγνεται μέγα,
†βαλοῦσα† δ' οἶκον ψῆφος ὥρθωσεν μία.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἀνὴρ ὅδ' ἐκπέφευγεν αἵματος δίκην·
ἴσον γάρ ἐστι τἀρίθμημα τῶν πάλων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ Παλλάς, ὦ σώσασα τοὺς ἐμοὺς δόμους,
γαίας πατρῴας ἐστερημένον σύ τοι
κατῴκισάς με· καί τις Ἑλλήνων ἐρεῖ
"Ἀργεῖος ἀνὴρ αὖθις, ἔν τε χρήμασιν
οἰκεῖ πατρῴοις, Παλλάδος καὶ Λοξίου
ἕκατι καὶ τοῦ πάντα κραίνοντος τρίτου
Σωτῆρος"· ὃς πατρῷον αἰδεσθεὶς μόρον
σῴζει με, μητρὸς τάσδε συνδίκους ὁρῶν.
ἐγὼ δὲ χώρᾳ τῇδε καὶ τῷ σῷ στρατῷ
τὸ λοιπὸν εἰς ἅπαντα πλειστήρη χρόνον
ὁρκωμοτήσας νῦν ἄπειμι πρὸς δόμους,
μή τοί τιν' Ἄρη δεῦρο πρυμνήτην χθονὸς
ἐλθόντ' ἐποίσειν εὖ κεκασμένον δορί.
αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ὄντες ἐν τάφοις τότε

750 γνώμης Musgrave: γνώμης δ' codd.
751 βαλοῦσα codd.: παροῦσα Voss: πεσόντα Blaydes: perh. καμόντα.
755 γαίας Dindorf: καὶ γῆς codd.
765–6 Ἄρη . . . δορί West: ἄνδρα . . . δόρυ codd.

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155 I translate my tentative conjecture.
156 See A. L. Boegehold, *AJA* 93 (1989) 81–83.

lack of good judgement can cause great harm, and a single vote can set an ‹afflicted› house on its feet.[155]

[*The tellers go up to* ATHENA *and quietly inform her of the result of the count.*]

ATHENA [*rising and extending her right arm towards* ORESTES[156]]
This man stands acquitted of the charge of bloodshed. The votes have been counted, and they are equal.

[*Exit* APOLLO.][157]

ORESTES
O Pallas, O saviour of my house! I was banished from the land of my father, and you are the one who has given me back my home! Now it will be said among the Greeks, "The man is an Argive again, dwelling amid his father's wealth, thanks to Pallas and Loxias and thirdly to the Saviour[158] who brings all things to fulfilment"—he who has had regard to my father's death and has saved me, seeing these advocates of my mother's. Now I depart for my home, but first I swear solemnly to this land and to your people, for the fullness of all time to come, that no helmsman of my land, well equipped with arms, will ever come bringing war against this place. For we ourself, being then in our

157 The text gives no clear indication of when Apollo makes his exit, and it is possible that he leaves at 777 rather than here; I follow R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *Studies in Aeschylus* (Cambridge, 1983) 147.

158 Yet again Zeus Soter is linked with the number three (see on *Supp.* 26 and *Cho.* 578, 1073).

τοῖς τἀμὰ παρβαίνουσι νῦν ὁρκώματα
ἀμηχάνοισι πράξομεν δυσπραξίαις,
ὁδοὺς ἀθύμους καὶ παρόρνιθας πόρους
τιθέντες, ὡς αὐτοῖσι μεταμέλῃ πόνος·
ὀρθουμένων δὲ καὶ πόλιν τὴν Παλλάδος
τιμῶσιν αἰεὶ τήνδε συμμάχῳ δορὶ
αὐτοῖσιν ἡμεῖς ἐσόμεθ' εὐμενέστεροι.
καὶ χαῖρε καὶ σὺ καὶ πολισσοῦχος λεώς·
πάλαισμ' ἄφυκτον τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἔχεις,
σωτήριόν τε καὶ δορὸς νικηφόρον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α ἰὼ θεοὶ νεώτεροι, παλαιοὺς νόμους
καθιππάσασθε κἀκ χερῶν εἵλεσθέ μου.
ἐγὼ δ' ἄτιμος ἁ τάλαινα, βαρύκοτος,
ἐν γᾷ τᾷδε, φεῦ,
ἰὸν ἰὸν ἀντιπεν-
θῆ μεθεῖσα καρδίας,
σταλαγμὸν χθονὶ
ἄφορον· ἐκ δὲ τοῦ
λειχὴν ἄφυλλος ἄτεκνος, ὦ Δίκα Δίκα,

774 ἐσόμεθ' Heath: ἔσμεν codd.
776 ἔχεις West: ἔχοις codd.
783–4 χθονὶ ἄφορον Turnebus: χθονιάφορον M (and codd. in 813–4).
785 ὦ Hermann, Δίκα Δίκα Lachmann: ἰὼ δίκα M (and codd. in 815).

tomb, will act against those who violate my present oath, inflicting hopeless misfortunes upon them, making their ways dispirited and their paths ill-omened, till they repent of their effort; but if my oath is uprightly maintained, and if they always honour their obligations to this city of Pallas by fighting at its side,[159] we shall be more favourable to them. Now farewell to you and to the people of your city: you have a means to success[160] that your enemies will be unable to escape, which will give you safety and make your wars victorious.

[*Exit* ORESTES.]

CHORUS

Ió, you younger gods, you have ridden roughshod over
the ancient laws, and taken them out of my hands into
your own!
And I, wretched that I am, am dishonoured, grievously
angry,
releasing poison, poison,
from my heart to cause grief in revenge
in this land—ah!—
a drip falling on the land,
such that it cannot bear![161] And from it
a canker causing leaflessness and childlessness—O
Justice, Justice!—

159 An Argive contingent of 1000 men soon afterwards fought alongside the Athenians at the battle of Tanagra, in 458 or 457 (Thucydides 1.107.5); those who perished were given a public funeral at Athens (Pausanias 1.29.8–10).

160 lit. "a wrestling trick".

161 ἄφορον means both "unendurable" and "producing infertility".

πέδον ἐπισύμενος
βροτοφθόρους κηλῖδας ἐν χώρᾳ βαλεῖ.
στενάζω· τί ῥέξω;
γελῶμαι· δύσοιστ᾽ ἐν
πολίταις ἔπαθον.
ἰὼ †μεγάλατοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς†
Νυκτὸς ἀτιμοπενθεῖς.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἐμοὶ πίθεσθε μὴ βαρυστόνως φέρειν·
οὐ γὰρ νενίκησθ᾽, ἀλλ᾽ ἰσόψηφος δίκη
ἐξῆλθ᾽ ἀληθῶς, οὐκ ἀτιμίᾳ σέθεν·
ἀλλ᾽ ἐκ Διὸς γὰρ λαμπρὰ μαρτύρια παρῆν,
αὐτός θ᾽ ὁ χρήσας αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ μαρτυρῶν,
ὡς ταῦτ᾽ Ὀρέστην δρῶντα μὴ βλάβας ἔχειν.
ὑμεῖς δὲ μήτε τῇδε γῇ βαρὺν κότον
σκήψητε, μὴ θυμοῦσθε, μηδ᾽ ἀκαρπίαν
τεύξητ᾽ ἀφεῖσαι †δαιμόνων† σταλάγματα,
βρωτῆρας ἀ᾽χνας σπερμάτων ἀνημέρους.
ἐγὼ γὰρ ὑμῖν πανδίκως ὑπίσχομαι

787 βαλεῖ Turnebus: βαλεῖν M (and codd. in 817).
788 στενάζω codd. in 818: στενάξω M here.
789 γελῶμαι Tyrwhitt: γένωμαι M (and codd. in 819).
789 δύσοιστ᾽ ἐν Murray: δύσοιστα M (and codd. in 819).
791 μεγάλατοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς M (and codd. in 821): μεγάλα τοι Victorius: perh. ἰὼ ἰὼ κόραι μεγάλα δυστυχεῖς: or is δυστυχεῖς a gloss on μεγάλατοι?
794 πίθεσθε Turnebus: πείθεσθε M. 798 ὁ χρήσας Turnebus: ὀχθήσας (or ὀρθήσας) Mac: ὁ θήσας Mpc.

sweeping over the soil
will fill the land with miasmas fatal to humans.
I groan. What shall I do?
I am a laughing-stock. I have suffered
unbearable treatment at the hands of the citizens!
Ió, great is the calamity that we unhappy daughters
of Night have suffered,[162] grieving and dishonoured!

ATHENA

Let me persuade you not to take this with grief and groaning. You have not been defeated; the result of the trial was a genuinely equal vote, and did you no dishonour.[163] The thing was that there was plain evidence before the court originating from Zeus, and the witness who testified was the same who had given the oracle that Orestes would come to no harm for doing what he did. So do not send down grievous wrath against this land; do not be angry; do not create sterility by releasing a dripping liquid from your lungs[164] to make a savage froth that devours the seed—because I unreservedly promise you that you will have an

[162] The details of the text are very uncertain, but the general sense is not in doubt.

[163] Or "and was not due to any contempt for you"; the Greek is ambiguous, perhaps designedly.

[164] I translate Musgrave's emendation; M's reading ("from divinities") gives no sense.

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800 δὲ μήτε Wieseler: δέ τε M.

801 σκήψητε Elmsley: σκήψησθε M. 802 δαιμόνων M: πλευμόνων Musgrave: πνευμάτων Headlam.

803 ἄχνας Musgrave: αἰχμὰς M.

ἕδρας τε καὶ κευθμῶνας †ἐνδίκου† χθονός,
λιπαροθρόνοισιν ἡμένας ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάραις,
ἕξειν, ὑπ᾽ ἀστῶν τῶνδε τιμαλφουμένας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. α ἰὼ θεοὶ νεώτεροι, παλαιοὺς νόμους
καθιππάσασθε κἀκ χερῶν εἵλεσθέ μου.
ἐγὼ δ᾽ ἄτιμος ἁ τάλαινα, βαρύκοτος,
ἐν γᾷ τᾷδε, φεῦ,
ἰὸν ἰὸν ἀντιπεν-
θῆ μεθεῖσα καρδίας,
σταλαγμὸν χθονὶ
ἄφορον· ἐκ δὲ τοῦ
λειχὴν ἄφυλλος ἄτεκνος, ὦ Δίκα Δίκα,
πέδον ἐπισύμενος
βροτοφθόρους κηλῖδας ἐν χώρᾳ βαλεῖ.
στενάζω· τί ῥέξω;
γελῶμαι· δύσοιστ᾽ ἐν
πολίταις ἔπαθον.
ἰὼ †μεγάλατοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς†
Νυκτὸς ἀτιμοπενθεῖς.

805 ἐνδίκου M: ἐν μυχοῖς Blaydes: εὐοίκου West.
808–823 See also textual notes on 778–793.
812 ἀντιπενθῆ M in 782: ἀντιπαθῆ vel sim. codd. here.
816 ἐπισύμενος M in 786: ἐπεσσύμενος codd. here.

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165 This must be the approximate sense; the transmitted reading would give the meaning "in a righteous land", but ἐνδίκου is

underground abode within our soil[165] where, sitting on gleaming thrones[166] close to your altars, you will receive honours from these citizens.

CHORUS

Ió, you younger gods, you have ridden roughshod over
the ancient laws, and taken them out of my hands into
your own!
And I, wretched that I am, am dishonoured, grievously
angry,
releasing poison, poison,
from my heart to cause grief in revenge
in this land—ah!—
a drip falling on the land,
such that it cannot bear! And from it
a canker causing leaflessness and childlessness—O
Justice, Justice!—
sweeping over the soil
will fill the land with miasmas fatal to humans.
I groan. What shall I do?
I am a laughing-stock. I have suffered
unbearable treatment at the hands of the citizens!
Ió, great is the calamity that we unhappy daughters
of Night have suffered, grieving and dishonoured!

under strong suspicion of being a corruption under the influence of *παν*δίκως in the previous line.

166 These must have been sacred stones in the precinct of the Semnai Theai which were periodically anointed with oil. Cf. Theophrastus, *Characters* 16.5; Pausanias 10.24.6; *Odyssey* 3.406–411 (sacred stones, "gleaming with oil", serve as a throne for Nestor); and see W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Eng. tr. Oxford, 1985) 72.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

οὐκ ἔστ᾽ ἄτιμοι, μηδ᾽ ὑπερθύμως ἄγαν
θεαὶ βροτῶν κτίσητε δύσκηλον χθόνα.
κἀγὼ πέποιθα Ζηνί, καὶ—τί δεῖ λέγειν;—
καὶ κληῖδας οἶδα δώματος μόνη θεῶν
ἐν ᾧ κεραυνός ἐστιν ἐσφραγισμένος.
ἀλλ᾽ οὐδὲν αὐτοῦ δεῖ. σὺ δ᾽ εὐπειθὴς ἐμοὶ
γλώσσης ματαίας μη ᾽κβάλῃς ἔπη χθονὶ
καρπὸν φέροντα πάντα μὴ πράσσειν καλῶς.
κοίμα κελαινοῦ κύματος πικρὸν μένος,
ὡς σεμνότιμος καὶ ξυνοικήτωρ ἐμοί·
πολλῆς δὲ χώρας τῆσδε τἀκροθίνια,
θύη πρὸ παίδων καὶ γαμηλίου τέλους,
ἔχουσ᾽ ἐς αἰεὶ τόνδ᾽ ἐπαινέσεις λόγον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. β ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε,
φεῦ,
ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα, κατά τε γᾶν οἰκεῖν,
ἀτίετον, φεῦ, μύσος.
πνέω τοι μένος θ᾽ ἅπαντά τε κότον.
οἰοῖ δᾶ φεῦ·
τίς μ᾽ ὑποδύεται πλευρὰς ὀδύνα;
ἄιε, μᾶτερ Νύξ·

825 κτίσητε Linwood: στήσητε codd.
827 δώματος Portus: δωμάτων codd.
830 ἔπη χθονὶ Burges: ἐπὶ χθόνα codd.
839 κατά τε M in 871: κατὰ codd. here (and *f* in 871).

ATHENA

You are *not* dishonoured! And do not yield to excessive anger and, goddesses that you are, afflict mortals with an evil canker on their land. I for my part have trust in Zeus, and—what need have I to say more?—and, alone among the gods, I know the keys to the chamber in which his thunderbolt is sealed up. But there is no need for that. Be readily persuaded by me: do not loose off against this land the words of a foolish tongue, saying that no fruit-bearing things shall thrive. Lull to rest the bitter force of the black surge; think of yourselves as being held in august honour and as sharers of my home. From this land, mighty as it shall be, you will for ever receive the first-fruits, sacrifices before childbirth and before the completion of marriage, and you will thank me for these words.

CHORUS

That I should be treated so—
ah!—
I, the old and wise, and should dwell in this land,
dishonoured—ah!—and abhorred!
I breathe out total fury and total wrath!
Oioi, dah, pheu!
What is this pain that penetrates my side?
Hear me, O mother Night!

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840 *μένος θ'* Hartung: *μένος* codd. (here and 873).

843 *ὀδύνα* Dale, Page: *ὀδύνα* (*ὀδύναι* G F E here) *θυμὸν* codd. (here and 875).

ἀπό με γὰρ τιμᾶν δαναιᾶν θεῶν
δυσπάλαμοι παρ᾽ οὐδὲν ἦραν δόλοι.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ὀργὰς ξυνοίσω σοι· γεραιτέρα γὰρ εἶ·
καὶ τῷ μὲν εἶ σὺ κάρτ᾽ ἐμοῦ σοφωτέρα,
φρονεῖν δὲ κἀμοὶ Ζεὺς ἔδωκεν οὐ κακῶς.
ὑμεῖς δ᾽ ἐς ἀλλόφυλον ἐλθοῦσαι χθόνα
γῆς τῆσδ᾽ ἐρασθήσεσθε, προὐννέπω τάδε·
οὐπιρρέων γὰρ τιμιώτερος χρόνος
ἔσται πολίταις τοῖσδε, καὶ σὺ τιμίαν
ἕδραν ἔχουσα πρὸς δόμοις Ἐρεχθέως
τεύξῃ παρ᾽ ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικείων στόλων
ὅσ᾽ ἂν παρ᾽ ἀλλων οὔποτ᾽ ἂν σχέθοις βροτῶν.
σὺ δ᾽ ἐν τόποισι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι μὴ βάλῃς
μήθ᾽ αἱματηρὰς θηγάνας, σπλάγχνων βλάβας
νέων, ἀοίνοις ἐμμανεῖς θυμώμασιν,

845 με γὰρ Heyse: γάρ με codd. (here and 878).
845 δαναιᾶν L. Dindorf: δαμαίαν M^{s} here: δαμαί*ων M here: δαμίαν M in 878: δαμέαν *f* (here and 878).
849 καὶ τῷ Wakefield (cf. Σ^{M} διὰ τὸν χρόνον): καίτοι codd.
849 μὲν εἶ Abresch: μὲν M: γε μὴν *f*.
857 ὅσ᾽ ἂν Korais: ὅσην codd.
860 ἀοίνοις *m*: ἀοίνους M *f*.

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167 As the Herald did in *Agamemnon* (540–5); see Y. Yatromanolakis in E. J. Stafford and J. Herrin ed. *Personification in the Greek World* (Aldershot, 2005) 267–283.

168 i.e. the temple of Athena Polias, in which the hero Erechtheus also dwelt (*Iliad* 2.547–551, *Odyssey* 7.81).

The evil scheming and trickery of the gods has sundered
me
from my age-old privileges, and made me into nothing!

ATHENA

I will be indulgent towards your anger, since you are older than I; but while for that reason you are much wiser than I am, still Zeus has given me too a fair degree of intelligence. If you go to the land of another people, then I foretell you will long for this country like lovers.[167] Time as it flows on will bring ever-greater glory to these citizens, and you too will have a glorious abode, close to the house of Erechtheus,[168] and will receive from processions of men and women[169] such honours as you would never get from any other race of mortals. Do not plant in my country the whetstones of bloodshed[170] which corrupt young men's visceral feelings, making them mad with a fierce spirit that does not come from wine; and do not, either, take the

169 lit. "from men and processions of women".

170 i.e. influences that sharpen in men's hearts the spirit of wrathful violence. The denunciation of civil war, which begins here and continues till 866, appears to be a last-minute addition by the poet to an already completed script. It makes this speech of Athena's substantially longer than her three others in this scene, and τοιαῦτ' in 867 refers back not to what now directly precedes it, but to 854–7; on the other hand the passage cannot be a post-Aeschylean interpolation, since there is no post-Aeschylean date to which its message, which deplores civil war *but positively encourages external war* (864), would be appropriate. See E. R. Dodds, *PCPS* 6 (1960) 23–24 = *The Ancient Concept of Progress* (Oxford, 1973) 51–52.

μήτ' ἐξελοῦσα καρδίαν ἀλεκτόρων
ἐν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀστοῖσιν ἱδρύσῃς, Ἄρη
ἐμφύλιόν τε καὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους θρασύν.
θυραῖος ἔστω πόλεμος, οὐ μόλις παρὼν
ἐν ᾧ τις ἔσται δεινὸς εὐκλείας ἔρως·
ἐνοικίου δ' ὄρνιθος οὐ λέγω μάχην.
τοιαῦθ' ἑλέσθαι σοι πάρεστιν ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
εὖ δρῶσαν, εὖ πάσχουσαν, εὖ τιμωμένην
χώρας μετασχεῖν τῆσδε θεοφιλεστάτης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. β ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε,
φεῦ,
ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα, κατά τε γᾶν οἰκεῖν,
ἀτίετον, φεῦ, μύσος.
πνέω τοι μένος θ' ἅπαντά τε κότον.
οἰοῖ δᾶ φεῦ·
τίς μ' ὑποδύεται πλευρὰς ὀδύνα;
ἄιε, μᾶτερ Νύξ·
ἀπό με γὰρ τιμᾶν δαναιᾶν θεῶν
δυσπάλαμοι παρ' οὐδὲν ἦραν δόλοι.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

οὔτοι καμοῦμαί σοι λέγουσα τἀγαθά,
ὡς μήποτ' εἴπῃς πρὸς νεωτέρας ἐμοῦ

861 ἐξελοῦσα considered but rejected by West: ἐξελοῦσ' ὡς codd. 862 ἱδρύσῃς Ἄρη Stephanus: ἱδρύσῃ κάρη Mpc: ἱδρύσῃ κάρα Mac *f*.

870–880 See textual notes on 837–847.

hearts out of fighting-cocks and implant them in my citizens, a spirit of internecine violence that emboldens them to fight each other.[171] Let there be external war, and plenty of it,[172] for him in whom there is a fierce desire for glory: I make no account of the fighting of a cock on its own midden. Such is the future that you can choose at my hands: one of good deeds, good treatment and good honour, as sharers in this land which the gods love beyond all others.

CHORUS

That I should be treated so—
ah!—
I, the old and wise, and should dwell in this land,
dishonoured—ah!—and abhorred!
I breathe out total fury and total wrath!
Oioi, dah, pheu!
What is this pain that penetrates my side?
Hear me, O mother Night!
The evil scheming and trickery of the gods has sundered me
from my age-old privileges, and made me into nothing!

ATHENA

I will never tire of speaking to you of these good things I offer, so that you may never say that you, an ancient goddess,

171 "This bird is so pugnacious that, whereas other animals respect kinship, it alone shows no mercy [to its kin]" (scholia). It was believed that a cockerel would unhesitatingly fight even against its own father (Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1427–9; *Birds* 757–9, 1347–52).

172 lit. "presenting itself without stint".

θεὸς παλαιὰ καὶ πολισσούχων βροτῶν
ἄτιμος ἔρρειν τοῦδ' ἀπόξενος πέδου.
ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἁγνόν ἐστί σοι Πειθοῦς σέβας,
γλώσσης ἐμῆς μείλιγμα καὶ θελκτήριον—
σὺ δ' οὖν μένοις ἄν· εἰ δὲ μὴ θέλεις μένειν,
οὐ τἂν δικαίως τῇδ' ἐπιρρέποις πόλει
μῆνίν τιν' ἢ κότον τιν' ἢ βλάβην στρατῷ·
ἔξεστι γάρ σοι τῆσδε γαμόρῳ χθονὸς
εἶναι δικαίως εἰς τὸ πᾶν τιμωμένῃ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄνασσ' Ἀθάνα, τίνα με φὴς ἔξειν ἕδραν;

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

πάσης ἀπήμον' οἰζύος· δέχου δὲ σύ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ δὴ δέδεγμαι· τίς δέ μοι τιμὴ μένει;

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ὡς μή τιν' οἶκον εὐθενεῖν ἄνευ σέθεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ τοῦτο πράξεις, ὥστ' ἐμὲ σθένειν τόσον;

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

τῷ γὰρ σέβοντι συμφορὰς ὀρθώσομεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καί μοι πρόπαντος ἐγγύην θήσει χρόνου;

890 τῆσδε E: τῇδε M G F *z*.
890 γαμόρῳ Dobree: γ' ἀμοίρῳ *z*: γ' ἀμοίρου M *f*.

are wandering in dishonour, banished from this land by me, young as I am, and the men who inhabit my city. If you have reverence for the awesome power of Persuasion, the charm and enchantment of my tongue—[*with a change of tone*] well, anyway, please do stay. But if you prefer not to, it would be unjust for you to let fall on this city any wrath, or any anger, or any harm to its people; for you have the opportunity to be a landholder in this country, and be justly honoured for ever.

CHORUS

Lady Athena, what abode do you say I am to have?

ATHENA

One that is free from all pain and distress. Please accept it.

CHORUS

Suppose I do accept it: what privilege awaits me?

ATHENA

That no house will prosper without your aid.

CHORUS

You will bring that about, so as to give *me* such great power?

ATHENA

Yes, I will uphold the fortunes of those who revere you.

CHORUS

And you will guarantee me this for all future time?

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892 ἕξειν Elmsley: ἔχειν codd.
895 εὐθενεῖν Scaliger: εὐσθενεῖν codd.
898 πρόπαντος Abresch: πρὸ παντὸς codd.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἔξεστι γάρ μοι μὴ λέγειν ἃ μὴ τελῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θέλξειν μ᾽ ἔοικας, καὶ μεθίσταμαι κότου.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

τοιγὰρ κατὰ χθόν᾽ οὖσ᾽ ἐπικτήσῃ φίλους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί οὖν μ᾽ ἄνωγας τῇδ᾽ ἐφυμνῆσαι χθονί;

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ὁποῖα νίκης μὴ κακῆς ἐπίσκοπα,
καὶ ταῦτα γῆθεν ἔκ τε ποντίας δρόσου
ἐξ οὐρανοῦ τε· κἀνέμων ἀήματα
εὐηλίως πνέοντ᾽ ἐπιστείχειν χθόνα·
καρπόν τε γαίας καὶ βοτῶν ἐπίρρυτον
ἀστοῖσιν εὐθενοῦντα μὴ κάμνειν χρόνῳ·
καὶ τῶν βροτείων σπερμάτων σωτηρίαν.
τῶν δ᾽ εὐσεβούντων ἐκφορωτέρα πέλοις·
στέργω γάρ, ἀνδρὸς φιτυποίμενος δίκην,
τὸ τῶν δικαίων τῶνδ᾽ ἀπένθητον γένος.
τοιαῦτά σοὔστι· τῶν ἀρειφάτων δ᾽ ἐγὼ
πρεπτῶν ἀγώνων οὐκ ἀνέξομαι τὸ μὴ οὐ
τήνδ᾽ ἀστύνικον ἐν βροτοῖς τιμᾶν πόλιν.

907 *βοτῶν* anon.: *βροτῶν* codd. 910 δ᾽ *εὐσεβούντων* Heath: *δυσσεβούντων f*: *δυσσεβούντων* δ᾽ M.

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173 Probably meaning that women may be granted safe, full-term pregnancy and live birth.

ATHENA

Yes, I am free not to promise what I will not fulfil.

CHORUS

I think you are going to charm me, and I am moving away from my anger.

ATHENA

That means that you are going to stay in this land and gain new friends.

CHORUS

So what blessings do you bid me invoke upon this land?

ATHENA

Such as are appropriate to an honourable victory, coming moreover both from the earth, and from the waters of the sea, and from the heavens; and for the gales of wind to come over the land breathing the air of bright sunshine; and for the fruitfulness of the citizens' land and livestock to thrive in abundance, and not to fail with the passage of time; and for the preservation of human seed.[173] But may you give greater fertility to those who are pious; for like a shepherd of plants,[174] I cherish the race to which these righteous men[175] belong. Such things as these are for you to grant; for my part, I would find it unendurable not to honour this city among men by making her a city of victory in glorious martial struggles.

[174] i.e. a cultivator who feels the same personal bond to each one of his plants that a shepherd feels to each animal in his flock; this would particularly apply to Attica's many growers of grapes, olives and figs.

[175] Probably referring to the members of the Areopagus Council ("the best among my citizens", 487); Athena will no doubt have made her meaning clear by a gesture.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α δέξομαι Παλλάδος ξυνοικίαν,
οὐδ' ἀτιμάσω πόλιν
τὰν καὶ Ζεὺς ὁ παγκρατὴς Ἄρης
τε φρούριον θεῶν νέμει,
ῥυσίβωμον Ἑλλά-
νων ἄγαλμα δαιμόνων·
ᾇ τ' ἐγὼ κατεύχομαι
θεσπίσασα πρευμενῶς
ἐπισσύτους βίου τύχας ὀνησίμους
γαίας ἐξαμβρῦσαι
φαιδρὸν ἁλίου σέλας.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

τάδ' ἐγὼ προφρόνως τοῖσδε πολίταις
πράσσω, μεγάλας καὶ δυσαρέστους
δαίμονας αὐτοῦ κατανασσαμένη.
πάντα γὰρ αὖται τὰ κατ' ἀνθρώπους
ἔλαχον διέπειν·
ὁ †δὲ μὴ† κύρσας βαρέων τούτων
οὐκ οἶδεν ὅθεν πληγαὶ βιότου·
τὰ γὰρ ἐκ προτέρων ἀπλακήματά νιν

925 ἐξαμβρῦσαι Pauw: ἐξαμβρόσαι M: ἐξαμυρόσαι *f*.
932 δὲ μὴ codd.: γε μὴν Linwood.

CHORUS

I will accept a residence with Pallas,
and I will not dishonour the city
in which there dwell also Zeus the almighty
and Ares—the guard-post of the gods,
the protector of their altars, the delight
of the divinities of Greece;[176]
for which city I pray,
and prophesy with kind intent,
that the bright light of the sun
may cause blessings beneficial to her life
to burst forth in profusion from the earth.

ATHENA

It is out of goodwill towards my citizens
that I do this, inviting these great divinities,
hard to please, to settle here.
Their allotted function is to manage
all human affairs.
And he who meets with their enmity[177]
does not know whence come the blows that fall upon his life;
for the sins that come from his ancestors

176 These phrases have little relevance to the Athens of the heroic age, but much to the Athens of Aeschylus' day, which claimed to have defended, and to be taking vengeance on behalf of, the gods and their sanctuaries against the sacrilegious Persians who had looted and destroyed temples and altars in Athens and in many other places (cf. *Persians* 809–812).

177 The transmitted text would give the absurd meaning "And he who does not meet with their hostility . . ."

πρὸς τάσδ' ἀπάγει, σιγῶν δ' ὅλεθρος
καὶ μέγα φωνοῦντ'
ἐχθραῖς ὀργαῖς ἀμαθύνει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. α δενδροπήμων δὲ μὴ πνέοι βλάβα—
τὰν ἐμὰν χάριν λέγω—
φλογμοὺς ὀμματοστερεῖς φυτῶν,
τὸ μὴ περᾶν ὅρον τόπων·
μηδ' ἄκαρπος αἰα-
νὴς ἐφερπέτω νόσος·
μῆλα δ' εὐθενοῦντα Πὰν
ξὺν διπλοῖσιν ἐμβρύοις
τρέφοι χρόνῳ τεταγμένῳ· γόνος <δ' ἀεὶ>
πλουτόχθων ἑρμαίαν
δαιμόνων δόσιν τίνοι.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἦ τάδ' ἀκούετε, πόλεως φρούριον,
οἷ' ἐπικραίνει;

935 σιγῶν δ' Musgrave: σιγῶν codd. 940 φλογμοὺς Wilamowitz: φλογμὸς *f*: φλογμός τ' *z*: φλοιγμὸς M.
940 ὀμματοστερεῖς Heath: ὀμματοστερὴς codd.
944 δ' Blaydes: τ' codd. 944 εὐθενοῦντα Πὰν Meineke: εὐθενοῦντ' (-θην- *f*) ἄγαν codd.
946 <δ' ἀεὶ> add. Musgrave.
948 τίνοι Schoemann: τίοι codd.

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178 This does not mean that the Furies will be punishing innocent Athenians for the sins of their ancestors; that is not something

hale him before them,[178] and silent destruction,
loud boaster though he may be,
crushes him because of their hostile wrath.

CHORUS

And may no wind bringing harm to trees—
I declare my own gracious gift—
blow scorching heat that robs plants of their buds:
let that not pass the borders of the land.
Nor let any grievous, crop-destroying
plague come upon them;
may their flocks flourish, and may Pan[179]
rear them to bear twin young
at the appointed time; and may their offspring always
have riches in their soil, and repay
the lucky find granted them by the gods.[180]

ATHENA [*to the members of the Areopagus council*]
Bulwark of the city, do you hear
what these words are accomplishing?

Athena would welcome, particularly after having saved a non-Athenian matricide from their wrath. The sentence should be read in the light of the assumption that children can be expected to inherit the character and dispositions of their parents (cf. 910–2, *Ag.* 727–8, etc.); we have seen examples earlier in the trilogy—Atreus and Agamemnon were both child-killers, Thyestes and Aegisthus both adulterers. See A. F. Garvie, *Aeschylus: Choephori* (Oxford, 1986) xviii.

179 The god of shepherds (cf. *Homeric Hymn* 19).

180 The reference is to the silver mines of Laurium (cf. *Pers.* 238); the Athenians will "repay" the gods' gift by using part of it to finance sacrifices and/or by depositing in sacred treasuries what is not required for current expenditure.

μέγα γὰρ δύναται πότνι' Ἐρινὺς
παρά τ' ἀθανάτοις τοῖς θ' ὑπὸ γαῖαν,
περὶ δ' ἀνθρώπων φανέρ' ὡς τελέως
διαπράσσουσιν, τοῖς μὲν ἀοιδάς,
τοῖς δ' αὖ δακρύων
βίον ἀμβλωπὸν παρέχουσαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. β ἀνδροκμῆτας δ' ἀω-
ρους ἀπεννέπω τύχας,
νεανίδων τ' ἐπηράτων
ἀνδροτυχεῖς βιότους δότε, κῦρος ἔχοντες
†θεαὶ τῶν† Μοῖραι
ματροκασιγνῆται,
δαίμονες ὀρθονόμοι,
παντὶ δόμῳ μετάκοινοι,
παντὶ χρόνῳ δ' ἐπιβριθεῖς,
ἐνδίκοις ὁμιλίαις
πάντᾳ τιμιώταται θεῶν.

953 *φανέρ' ὡς* Meineke: *φανερῶς* codd.
954 *δακρύων z*: *κρύων* M *f*.
960 *κῦρος* Heyse: *κύρι'* M^{pc}: *κ*ρι'* M^{ac}: *κύριες f*.
961 *θεαὶ τῶν* codd.: *θεαί τ' ὦ* Hermann: *θεοὶ καὶ* Butler.
964 *μετάκοινοι* Turnebus: *μεγάκοινοι f*: *μέγακοινοι* M.

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181 This phrase may denote either the chthonic gods (in which case "the immortals", like "the gods" in 644 and elsewhere, will refer to the heavenly gods only) or the souls of the dead in Hades.

For the august Fury has great power
among the immortals and among those beneath the earth;[181]
and as regards humans it is manifest how decisively
they effect their will, furnishing
to some joyful song,
to others a life
dim-eyed with tears.

CHORUS

I forbid the misfortunes
that make men die before their time,
and ask you to grant that lovely young women
live and get husbands, you gods who rightfully
possess that power[182] and you Fates,
our sisters, children of the same mother,[183]
divinities just in apportionment,
sharers in every house,[184]
of weighty power at all times,
in every way the most highly honoured of gods
in their righteous visitations.

182 I translate Butler's conjecture; the gods meant are presumably Zeus and Hera, the patrons of marriage, and perhaps also Aphrodite (cf. 213–6, and 217 for the Fates' connection with marriage).

183 The Fates are children of Night (with no father) in Hesiod, *Theogony* 217.

184 Because the continuity of every οἶκος depends upon marriage and birth, with both of which the Fates are closely connected.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

τάδε τοι χώρᾳ τῆμῇ προφρόνως
ἐπικραινομένων
γάνυμαι· στέργω δ' ὄμματα Πειθοῦς
ὅτι μοι γλῶσσαν καὶ στόμ' ἐπώπα
πρὸς τάσδ' ἀγρίως ἀπανηναμένας.
ἀλλ' ἐκράτησε Ζεὺς ἀγοραῖος,
νικᾷ δ' ἀγαθῶν
ἔρις ἡμετέρα διὰ παντός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. β τὰν δ' ἄπληστον κακῶν
μήποτ' ἐν πόλει στάσιν
τᾷδ' ἐπεύχομαι βρέμειν,
μηδὲ πιοῦσα κόνις μέλαν αἷμα πολιτᾶν
δι' ὀργὰν ποινᾶς
ἀντιφόνους ἄτας
ἁρπαλίσαι πόλεως·
χάρματα δ' ἀντιδιδοῖεν
κοινοφιλεῖ διανοίᾳ
καὶ στυγεῖν μιᾷ φρενί·
πολλῶν γὰρ τόδ' ἐν βροτοῖς ἄκος.

971 ἐπώπα Schütz: ἐπωπᾷ M: ἐποπτᾷ *f*.
985 κοινοφιλεῖ Hermann: κοινοφελεῖ M: κοινωφελεῖ M^{s} *f*.

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185 i.e, that the goddess Persuasion (Peitho) blessed and guided my speech.

186 Zeus Agoraios, whose altar, at Athens, stood not only in the Agora (market-place) but also on the Pnyx where the citizen as-

ATHENA

Now, I declare, that they are accomplishing
these things, in goodwill towards my country,
I rejoice; and I am happy that the eyes of Persuasion
watched over my tongue and lips[185]
when they responded to these beings who were savagely
rebuffing me.
Yes, Zeus of Assemblies[186] has triumphed;
and my struggle in the cause of good
has won a victory that will last for ever.

CHORUS

I pray that civil strife,
insatiate of evil,
may never rage in this city;
and may the dust not drink up the dark blood of the
citizens
and then, out of lust for revenge,
eagerly welcome the city's ruin
through retaliatory murder;[187]
rather may they give happiness in return for happiness,
resolved to be united in their friendship
and unanimous in their enmity;
for this is a cure for many ills among men.

sembly (ἐκκλησία) held its meetings (cf. scholia to Aristophanes, *Knights* 410).

187 In *Cho.* 400–2 it was said that the murder-victim's blood, spilt on the ground, "demand[s]" the shedding of other blood in requital: here similar emotions and desires are ascribed to the very dust in which that blood has been absorbed. The emotions and desires are actually those of the faction-fighters who are determined to avenge their kinsmen's or comrades' blood even if the consequence is catastrophe for the entire community.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

ἆρα φρονοῦσιν γλώσσης ἀγαθῆς
ὁδὸν εὑρίσκειν;
ἐκ τῶν φοβερῶν τῶνδε προσώπων
μέγα κέρδος ὁρῶ τοῖσδε πολίταις·
τάσδε γὰρ εὔφρονας εὔφρονες αἰεὶ
μέγα τιμῶντες καὶ γῆν καὶ πόλιν
ὀρθοδίκαιον
πρέψετε πάντως διάγοντες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. γ χαίρετε, χαίρετ' ἐναισιμίαισι πλούτου,
χαίρετ', ἀστικὸς λεώς,
ἵκταρ ἥμενοι Διὸς
παρθένου φίλας φίλοι,
σωφρονοῦντες ἐν χρόνῳ·
Παλλάδος δ' ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
ὄντας ἄζεται πατήρ.

989 εὑρίσκειν Pauw: εὑρίσκει codd.
995 πάντως G: πάντες M F *z*.
996 χαίρετε χαίρετ' Turnebus: χαίρετ' codd.
997 ἀστικὸς codd.: Ἀττικὸς *t*.
999 παρθένου Robortello, Turnebus: παρθένους M F: παρθένοις G *z*.

ATHENA

Are they minded to find the path
of fair speech?[188]
From these fearsome faces
I see great benefit coming to these citizens;
for by always kindly giving great honour
to these kindly powers, you will keep your land and city
on the straight road of justice
and be glorious in every way.

CHORUS

Rejoice, rejoice in the wealth you fitly deserve,
rejoice, people of the city,
seated close to the virgin daughter
of Zeus, loving and loved,
wise in due season![189]
You are under the wings of Pallas,
and her Father reveres you.

[*Enter the priestess of Athena Polias, her two adult assistants, and a number of girl temple-servants, bringing torches and purple robes, and leading one or more animals for sacrifice; they will form the secondary chorus who sing the final song. Between this point and 1031 a procession is formed, comprising everyone on stage except (for the present)* ATHENA.]

[188] Intonation will have made it clear that this is a rhetorical question expecting an affirmative answer.

[189] i.e. not needing to learn wisdom after the event "by suffering . . . against their will" (*Ag.* 176–181) but having the foresight (with the help of the fear the Furies inspire: cf. 517–525, 698–9, 990–1) to avoid wrongdoing in the first place.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

χαίρετε χὐμεῖς· προτέραν δ' ἐμὲ χρὴ
στείχειν θαλάμους ἀποδείξουσαν
πρὸς φῶς ἱερὸν τῶνδε προπομπῶν.
ἴτε, καὶ σφαγίων τῶνδ' ὑπὸ σεμνῶν
κατὰ γῆς σύμεναι τὸ μὲν ἀτηρὸν
χώρας κατέχειν, τὸ δὲ κερδαλέον
πέμπειν πόλεως ἐπὶ νίκῃ.
ὑμεῖς δ' ἡγεῖσθε, πολισσοῦχοι
παῖδες Κραναοῦ, ταῖσδε μετοίκοις·
εἴη δ' ἀγαθῶν
ἀγαθὴ διάνοια πολίταις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀντ. γ χαίρετε, χαίρετε δ' αὖθις, ἐπανδιπλοίζω,
πάντες οἱ κατὰ πτόλιν
δαίμονές τε καὶ βροτοί·
Παλλάδος πόλιν νέμον-
τες, μετοικίαν δ' ἐμὰν

1003 δ' ἐμὲ Wakefield: δέ με codd.
1005 προπομπῶν Portus: πρόπομπον codd.
1007 ἀτηρὸν Bentley: ἀτήριον codd.
1010 ὑμεῖς *z*: ἡμεῖς M *f*.
1011 μετοίκοις Turnebus: μέτοικοι codd.
1014 ἐπανδιπλοίζω Hermann: ἐπιδιπλοΐζω M *f*: διπλοΐζω *z*.

190 i.e. their new underground dwelling.

191 i.e. do not let evil chthonic influences rise up from below to harm Athens and the Athenians; the same double request to an

ATHENA

You too rejoice! But I must go before you
to show you your chambers,[190]
by the sacred light of these escorts.
Go, and when you have passed under the earth
to the accompaniment of these solemn sacrifices, keep
down below
what would be ruinous to my country,[191] and send up
what will benefit my city and give it victory!

[*To the members of the Areopagus Council*]

And you, children of Cranaus[192]
who dwell in this city, lead the way for these
immigrants;[193]
and may the citizens
think favourably of the favours they are receiving.

CHORUS

Rejoice, rejoice again—I say it repeatedly—
all you in the city,
both gods and mortals!
Dwelling in the city of Pallas,
and respecting my status

underworld power to keep evil down below but send good up to earth appears in *Pers.* 220–3 where the Persian Queen is advised to pray in these terms to her late husband's spirit.

192 A very early mythical king of Athens (contemporary with the Flood, according to the *Parian Marble* (*FGrH* 239 A 4), and [Apollodorus], *Library* 3.14.5).

193 Greek μέτοικοι, non-citizens who become permanent residents in a state.

εὐσεβοῦντες οὔτι μέμ-
ψεσθε συμφορὰς βίου.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΑ

αἰνῶ τε μύθους τῶνδε τῶν κατευγμάτων
πέμψω τε φέγγει λαμπάδων σελασφόρων
εἰς τοὺς ἔνερθε καὶ κάτω χθονὸς τόπους
ξὺν προσπόλοισιν αἵτε φρουροῦσιν βρέτας
τοὐμόν, δικαίως· ὄμμα γὰρ πάσης χθονὸς
Θησῆδος ἐξίκοισθ' ἄν, εὐκλεὴς λόχος
< >
φοινικοβάπτοις ἐνδυτοῖς ἐσθήμασιν
τιμᾶτε· κᾆτα φέγγος ὁρμάσθω πυρός,
ὅπως ἂν εὔφρων ἥδ' ὁμιλία χθονὸς
τὸ λοιπὸν εὐάνδροισι συμφοραῖς πρέπῃ.

1021 τε Hermann: δὲ codd.
1026 ἐξίκοισθ' Brown: ἐξίκοιτ' codd. {1027} παίδων γυναικῶν καὶ στόλος πρεσβυτίδων codd.: del. Brown.
1026/8 lacuna posited by Hermann and Brown: perh. e.g. ‹σεμνῶν θεῶν· ταύτας δέ, Κέκροπος λεώς, ›.
1029 κᾆτα Sommerstein: καὶ τὸ codd.

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194 The Greek text specifies them as female. They probably consist of the priestess of Athena Polias; her two adult assistants, the κοσμώ and the τραπεζώ or τραπεζοφόρος (Lycurgus fr. 47 Blass; Istros, *FGrH* 334 F 9); and one or more of the groups of young girls, chosen from the old Athenian aristocracy, who served for a fixed term during which they lived on the Acropolis, such as the ἀρρηφόροι and the ἐργαστῖναι. See M. P. J. Dillon, *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion* (London, 2002) 57–60, 84–89.

195 lit. "eye"; the reference is to the Acropolis. The actual cave-

as an immigrant here, you will have no cause
to complain about your fortunes in life.

ATHENA

I thank you for these words of blessing, and I will escort you, by the light of blazing torches, to your place below and beneath the earth, together with my servants[194] who guard my image—and rightly so; for I invite you to come right to the jewel[195] of the whole land of Theseus, an honoured band ‹of awesome goddesses. People of Cecrops,› honour ‹them›[196] with special robes dyed with purple, and then let the flame of fire set forward, so that for the future these companions of ours in this land may be friendly towards it and give it the glorious blessing of manly excellence.[197]

sanctuary of the Semnai Theai was close under the Areopagus (though on the side facing the Acropolis); "it seems that Aeschylus has taken a slight liberty with topographical fact in order to bring the cult of the reformed Erinyes close to that of Athena Polias" (A. L. Brown, *CQ* 34 [1984] 274).

196 On the text of this passage, see Brown *op.cit.* 272–5, and my 1989 commentary *ad loc.* In order to give a continuous rendering, I translate a restoration, suggested in my commentary by way of example, which assumes that only one line has been lost. It is also possible, though, that the lacuna is longer and contained more explicit reference to the fact that the Furies' purple robes are reminiscent of those worn by *μέτοικοι* (see on 1011) in the Panathenaic procession (Photius s.v. *σκάφας*, citing Menander fr. 147 K-A); in that case the lost passage might have ended e.g. ‹*ἀλλ' ὡς μετοίκους τάσδε τὰς σεμνὰς θεὰς*›, and line 1027 ("of girls, of women, and a procession of old women"), which (following Brown) I have deleted, might be a surviving fragment of it.

197 lit. "be glorious with the good fortune of manly excellence".

ΠΡΟΠΟΜΠΟΙ

στρ. α βᾶθ' ὁδόν, ὦ μεγάλαι φιλότιμοι
Νυκτὸς παῖδες ἄπαιδες, ὑπ' εὔφρονι πομπᾷ.
035 — εὐφαμεῖτε δέ, χωρῖται.

ἀντ. α γᾶς ὑπὸ κεύθεσιν ὠγυγίοισιν
τιμαῖς καὶ θυσίαις περίσεπτα τύχοιτε.
— εὐφαμεῖτε δὲ πανδαμεί.

στρ. β ἴλαοι δὲ καὶ εὐθύφρονες γᾷ
1041 δεῦρ' ἴτε, Σεμναὶ θεαί, πυριδάπτῳ
λαμπάδι τερπόμεναι καθ' ὁδόν.
— ὀλολύξατέ νυν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς.

1032 βᾶθ' ὁδόν, ὦ Headlam: βᾶτ' ἐν δόμῳ vel sim. codd.
1034 εὔφρονι Burney: εὐθύφρονι codd.
1035 χωρῖται Hermann: χωρεῖτε codd.
1037 τιμαῖς Hermann: καὶ τιμαῖς codd.
1038 περίσεπτα Musgrave, τύχοιτε Wakefield: περισέπτᾳ τύχᾳ τε vel sim. codd.
1041 Σεμναὶ θεαί Hartung: σεμναὶ codd.
1042 ὁδόν Boissonade: ὁδὸν δ' codd.

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198 It may be inferred from hints in the text (see my 1989 commentary, p. 278) that the order of the procession was approximately as follows: (two?) torch-bearers; Athena; her cultic household, led by the priestess, together with the sacrificial animal(s); the Areopagus Council, led by the herald and trumpeter (cf. 566–9); the Furies, now the Semnai Theai. For the audience, this spectacle would probably be reminiscent both of the Panathenaic procession (cf. on 1028) and of the great procession in honour of

[*By now the chorus have had the purple robes draped over them.* ATHENA *takes her place in the procession, which now begins to move off.*[198]]

THE PROCESSIONAL ESCORT

Come on your way, you great, honour-loving,
childless children of Night,[199] with our friendly escort.
Speak fair,[200] people of the land![201]

In the age-old recesses of the earth
may you receive great reverence with rituals and
sacrifices.
Speak fair, all you masses![202]

Favourably and righteously minded towards our land,
come hither, Awesome Goddesses, delighting
in the fire that devours our torches on your way.
Now raise a cry of triumph to crown our song!

the Semnai Theai themselves (see Introduction), in which the members of the Areopagus Council, with which the Semnai Theai were so closely associated, surely had a prominent role.

199 "Childless" because under the new dispensation crime will no longer "breed" fresh crime. Another possible understanding of the phrase is "children of Night who are no children" (i.e. are aged); neither interpretation need be excluded.

200 i.e. keep silence. These injunctions at the end of each stanza may be uttered by the priestess alone.

201 Probably addressed to the members of the Areopagus Council, the representatives on stage of the male citizen body.

202 Probably addressed to the theatre audience.

ἀντ. β †σπονδαὶ δ' ἐς τὸ πᾶν ἔνδαιδες οἴκων†
Παλλάδος ἀστοῖς Ζεὺς παντόπτας
οὕτω Μοῖρά τε συγκατέβα.
— ὀλολύξατέ νυν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς.

1044 so codd. (ἔνδαδες *f*): σπονδαὶ δ' εἰσόπιν (Linwood) ἐνδομετοικεῖν (punctuating after ἀστοῖς) Headlam: σπουδᾷ δ' εἴσιτε πανδάιδ' (perh. rather e.g. πάνδικον?) οἶκον (punctuating after οἶκον) West (after Young).

[*The cry of triumph is raised by all the men, women and girls in the procession.*]

Speedily enter your home < >:[203]
thus Zeus the all-seeing and Destiny
have come to the aid of Pallas' citizens.
Now raise a cry of triumph to crown our song!

[*The whole audience joins in the cry of triumph as the procession departs.*]

203 The text is desperately corrupt. I translate, without much conviction, the restoration of it proposed by West (*Studies* 294–5), except that I cannot accept his *παυδάιδ' οἶκον* "your home full of torches" (apart from anything else, *δαΐς* or *δᾴς* "torch" is not found in Aeschylus) and suspect that the transmitted letters *ἐνδαιδες* are a mechanical repetition of (*σπ*)*ονδαιδες* earlier in the line that has displaced the true text. An alternative possibility might be *πάνδικον οἶκον* "the home that is justly yours" (cf., for the idea, 891; for the word, 804 and *Supp.* 776). It is also quite possible that *Παλλάδος ἀστοῖς* may belong to this rather than the following sentence, being governed by a now lost or hopelessly corrupted verb. In that case the next sentence, beginning with *Ζεὺς*, might mean "Thus Zeus the all-seeing and Destiny have descended together", sc. from the Acropolis in the procession—Zeus being represented by his daughter Athena (cf. 736–8, 973), Destiny by the Erinyes-Semnai, sisters of the Fates (cf. 961–2), and the union of the two in a single procession symbolizing the restoration of harmony among the gods and, it may be hoped, among the Athenian people.

INDEX

This index includes all mentions of personal or place names in the (Greek) text of the plays, but only the more significant references in the Introduction and annotations. *Ag* = *Agamemnon; LB* = *Libation-Bearers; Eu* = *Eumenides.* In general, entries for countries, regions or cities (e.g., Phocis, Argos) include references to their peoples (e.g., Phocians, Argives). Boldface numerals indicate sections of a play where the character named is present on stage; mentions of the character's name within these sections are not separately indexed. Roman numerals refer to pages of the Introduction; superscript numbers indicate footnotes on these pages.

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